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THE

Letters of Horace Walpole

VOLUME IX.



Sir Joshua Reynolds. pinx. *J. Brown, sculpt.*

LAURA VISCOUNTESS CHEWTON.

LADY MARIA WALDEGRAVE. *Countess of Euston.*

LADY HORATIA WALDEGRAVE. *Wife of Capt.n Hugh Conway.*

Daughters of Her Royal Highness, Maria Duchess of Gloucester.

THE LETTERS

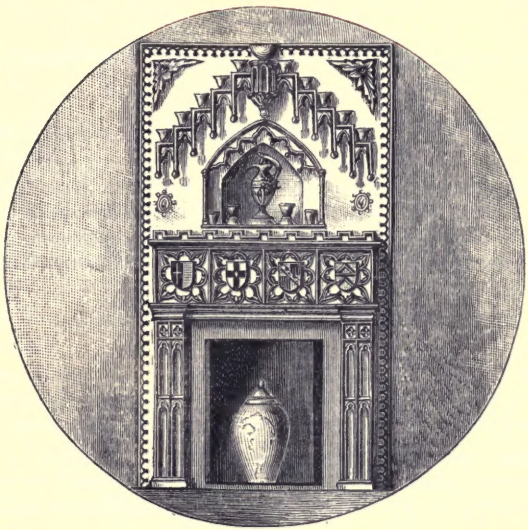
OF

HORACE WALPOLE

FOURTH EARL OF ORFORD

EDITED BY

PETER CUNNINGHAM



CHIMNEY-PIECE AT STRAWBERRY HILL

WITH SIXTY-FOUR STEEL PORTRAITS

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Edinburgh

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THE LETTERS

OF

HORACE WALPOLE.

2360. TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.

Strawberry Hill, July 27, 1785.

You thank me much more than the gift deserved, Sir: my editions of such pieces as I have left, are waste paper to me. I will not sell them at the ridiculously advanced prices that are given for them: indeed, only such as were published for sale, have I sold at all; and therefore the duplicates that remain with me are to me of no value, but when I can oblige a friend with them. Of a few of my impressions I have no copy but my own set; and, as I could give you only an imperfect collection, the present was really only a parcel of fragments. My memory was in fault about the 'Royal and Noble Authors.' I thought I had given them to you. I recollect now that I only lent you my own copy; but I have others in town, and you shall have them when I go thither. For Vertue's manuscript I am in no manner of haste. I heard on Monday, in London, that the *Letters* were written by a Mr. Pilkington, probably from a confounded information of 'Maty's Review:' my chief reason for calling on you twice this week, was to learn what you had heard, and I shall be much obliged to you for farther information; as I do not care to be too inquisitive, lest I should be suspected of knowing more of the matter.

There are many reasons, Sir, why I cannot come into your idea of printing Greek.[1] In the first place, I have two or three engage-

[1] "An edition of 'Anacreon had been recommended as a mere literary curiosity." *Pinkerton's note*, in *Walpoliana*, i. 107.—CUNNINGHAM.

ments for my press: and my time of life does not allow me to look but a little way farther. In the next, I cannot now go into new expenses of purchase: my fortune is very much reduced, both by my brother's [Sir Edward Walpole's] death, and by the late plan of reformation. The last reason would weigh with me, had I none of the others. My admiration of the Greeks was a little like that of the mob on other points, not from sound knowledge. I never was a good Greek scholar; have long forgotten what I knew of the language; and, as I never disguise my ignorance of anything, it would look like affectation to print Greek authors. I could not bear to print them, without owning that I do not understand them; and such a confession would perhaps be as much affectation as unfounded pretensions. I must, therefore, stick to my simplicity, and not go out of my line. It is difficult to divest one's self of vanity, because impossible to divest one's self of self-love. If one runs from one glaring vanity, one is catched by its opposite. Modesty can be as vain-glorious on the ground, as Pride on a triumphal car. Modesty, however, is preferable; for, should she contradict her professions, still she keeps her own secret, and does not hurt the pride of others. I have the honour to be, Sir, with great regard, yours.

2361. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 10, 1785.

I was just getting into my chaise with Mr. Jerningham to go to Park-place on Friday, when I received the honour of your Ladyship's letter, and consequently could not answer it so punctually as I generally do. We saw the new bridge at Henley, which is complete on one side, and is most beautiful; the bend of the arch was regulated by General Conway himself, on three centres, and for grace does not veil the bonnet to the Ponte di Trinità at Florence. His daughter's head of the Thame is placed, and has charming effect. The Isis is fixed too, but not yet uncovered. They are going, not the Thame and Isis, but the father and daughter, with the Duke of Richmond to Jersey, and I hope the sea air will be of service to her, for I think her far from well.

I had heard, Madam, of Lady Euston's felicity in being agreeable to Lady Ravensworth, and my niece being charmed with her Ladyship. This was no flattery, for it came to me indirectly from a letter to her sister Horatia. Indeed I trust that Lady Euston's calm temper and good sense, which resemble her father's, will always

answer to the character I have constantly given of her, and which is just the reverse of what that Tisiphone Lady Greenwich coined for her—or rather lent her from her own superabundant fund of bad qualities.

I have heard since my return, that Sir William Hamilton's renowned Vase, which had disappeared with so much mystery, is again discovered; not in the tomb, but in the treasury of the Duchess of Portland, in which I fancy it had made ample room for itself. He told me it would never go out of England. I do not see how he could warrant that. The Duke and Lord Edward have both shown how little stability there is in the riches of that family; and *mine* has felt how insecure the permanency of heir-looms! Lawyers, though so like in many points, are, in respect of their own code, the reverse of churchmen, and set it aside just as they please.

A mightier potentate, who sets aside codes, too, without ceremony, is going to sell part of his plunder by auction at Brussels. I have seen the catalogues of the jewels and pictures that are to be sold; and I took the trouble of counting them. Of pictures there are above three hundred and thirty; yet, by some numbers left in the margin, it looks as if there were not half a quarter of the forfeitures, though I can scarce believe that his Imperial rapacity loves the arts better than money. Sir Joshua Reynolds is gone to see them; yet there are but three of Rubens, two of Vandyck, one of Snyder, and half-a-dozen of Jordaens. The rest are of old Flemish masters, and most being large altar-pieces and too big for private houses, I should think would not sell well. It is said that the Catholics will not purchase such sacrilegious goods; but we virtuosos are seldom so scrupulous.

Of pearls there are more than seventeen thousand, probably small; and four thousand and six hundred diamonds, all roses, besides table diamonds. I used to imagine that most of the precious stones one sees in churches were false, concluding priests were too wise to lose the interest of their treasures. However, this sale confirms a contradictory opinion that I formed long ago; which was, that the bushels of diamonds, rubies, and pearls, with which the portraits of Henry VIII. and Queen Elizabeth are so gorgeously decked, had been embezzled from convents. The present profusion will lower their own value.

Cæsar is said to have already realised three millions sterling by the suppression of monachism; and by that wealth he will purchase a deluge of blood! *Such reformers* make one regret Popery! In

deed, Mother Reformation herself was too dearly purchased. Had I been Luther, and been really conscientious, which I doubt whether he was, and could have foreseen by what torrents of gore the Church was to be purified, I should have asked myself whether, for the benefit of any number of future millions of souls, I had a right to occasion the slaughter of a present million of lives; I should have hesitated on my mission, and I believe not have taken out my patent.

I have been told that when this Austrian bird of prey set about his reform, the nobility of Flanders presented a memorial to him, observing that most of the monastic had not been royal foundations, and therefore they hoped from his Imperial equity that he would restore to the respective families the lands which their ancestors had given away from their posterity to the Church. Cæsar made no reply, for he could make none that had common sense—but he did not seize an acre or a ducat the less.

Don't imagine that I am changing sides, Madam, because I have some *high church* qualms. It is laudable to suppress convents; but it ought to be done by forbidding any more persons to be professed. It is inhuman to turn those adrift who either entered conscientiously or are too old to seek a new livelihood by new professions. Besides, when those dear friends the Crown and the Church fall out, I adhere to the latter. Priests get their wealth or power by sense and address; monarchs by force and bloodshed: I am for sharpers against cut-throats.

2362. TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 18, 1785.

I AM sorry, dear Sir, that I must give you unanswerable reasons why I cannot print the work you recommend.[1] I have been so much solicited since I set up my press to employ it for others, that I was forced to make it a rule to listen to no such application. I refused Lord Hardwicke to print a publication of his; Lady Mary Forbes,

[1] It is impossible to say with certainty what is the work here alluded to; but, most probably, it was Ailred's 'Life of St. Ninian,' of which it appears, from a letter from the Rev. Rogers Ruding, dated August 4, 1785, that Mr. Pinkerton obtained at this time a transcript through him from the manuscript in the Bodleian Library. Pinkerton speaks of this manuscript in the second volume of his 'Early Scottish History,' p. 266, as "a meagre piece, containing very little as to Ninian's Pikish Mission." The letter alluded to from Mr. Ruding shows Pinkerton to have turned his mind to the antiquities of Scotland with great earnestness.—DAWSON TURNER.

to print letters of her ancestor, Lord Essex; and the Countess of Aldborough, to print her father's poems, though in a piece as small as what you mention.

These I recollect at once, besides others whose recommendations do not immediately occur to my memory; though I dare to say *they* do remember them, and would resent my breaking my rule. I have other reasons which I will not detail now, as the post goes out so early: I will only beg you not to treat me with so much ceremony, nor ever use the word *humbly* to me, who am no ways entitled to such respect.

One private gentleman is not superior to another in essentials: I fear the virtues of an untainted young heart are preferable to those of an old man long conversant with the world; and in the soundness of understanding you have shown and will show a depth which has not fallen to the lot of

Your sincere humble servant.

P.S. I will call on you in a few days, and say more on the particulars in your letter.

2363. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 19, 1785.

I AM glad your Lord is returned so soon, Madam, and has despatched so many prospects, and recovered of a law-suit, with which I did not know he was afflicted. His expedition and success would qualify him for an ambassador, if to be qualified for an office were a recommendation. I have oft been puzzled to guess why so many fools are sent about Europe on that employment, which seems to demand the utmost sagacity, shrewdness, and industry. At last I conceived this solution of my wonder: the incapacities selected are doubtless chosen for the resemblance they bear to the characters of the august personages they are to represent—an observation that escaped the great Wicqfort himself. But perhaps he adapted his precepts to the wise remark of a Spanish grandee to one of the Philips: "Your Majesty's self is but a ceremony." Consequently the copy ought not to be of more value than the original.

The newspapers told us of Mr. Murray's elopement. Pray, is not it too juvenile a prank at his time of life? And how came the nymph to overlook that circumstance? A Scot, too, to commit a disinterested imprudence,—strange!

The Duchess of Portland was a simple woman, but perfectly sober, and intoxicated only by *empty* vases. Other Duchesses, it seems, can grow tipsy with lemonade. *The* vase,[1] the two thousand pounder, is, I hear, to be sold again: but who is to buy it? Lady Frances Douglas tells me, from the present Duchess of Portland, that there are great uncertainties about the Will, and that they find it difficult to distinguish what is to be sold, and what not—so probably the lawyers may get more than the auctioneer.

The Bristol lunatic's is a more moving story even than the Heliconian milkwoman's. Miss Hannah More, who is humanity itself, has laboured in the service of both; but the former's case is desperate.

I am much flattered, Madam, by Lady Ravensworth's reading a book [Heron's] on my recommendation, and more by her liking it. I have read it three times, and admired the sensible parts more the last time than the first. If the author can arrive at judgment enough to winnow his grain from the chaff, I think he will make a great figure. He might be bold, without being extravagant. What I most dislike in so eccentric and daring a writer, is his patience in translating a whole 'Spectator' into his gibberish. Patience is, of all others, the virtue that seems the least congenial to genius; perseverance is nearer allied to madness than to originality.

As this is a letter of scraps and replies, I will add an answer that I forgot to make to a former question of your Ladyship. Pamela is a child, which Madame de Genlis gives out is an English girl, and which she is said to foster with more attention than her own children, or than the princesses of Orleans, to whom she is gover*nor*, for so she is styled. Sceptics pretend that Pamela is both her own child and a spurious Orleannoise. For fondness, I did not perceive the least; the resemblance is less obscure.

The Irish propositions seem to me to be brooding a storm. Methinks we have a strange propensity to gaming for our own dominions! France, like an old blacklegs, sits by, till the parties are heated, and she can strip the winner. I believe I shall live till we have not a whole island left to our back.

Friday night.

I wrote my last letter after dinner, before I went to the Duchess of Montrose. The moment after I arrived, Mr. Cambridge, who, rather than not be the first to trumpet a piece of news, would tell anybody the most disagreeable news, sent a card to acquaint the

[1] The famous Portland Vase, now in the British Museum.—Cunningham.

Duke and Duchess that, after a long debate, Mr. Orde had withdrawn his Irish bill. This occasioned a consternation, and then a dead silence. I don't believe the officious intelligencer will be thanked; however, I trust this defeat will have saved us from another civil war!

2364. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 26, 1785.

Though I am delighted to see your handwriting, I beg you will indulge me no more with it. It fatigues you, and that gives me more pain than your letters can give me satisfaction. Dictate a few words on your health to your secretary; it will suffice. I don't care a straw about the King and Queen of Naples, nor whether they visit your little Great Duke and Duchess. I am glad when Monarchs are playing with one another, instead of scratching: it is better they should be idle than mischievous. As I desire you *not* to write, I cannot be alarmed at a strange hand.

Your philosophic account of yourself is worthy of you. Still, I am convinced you are better than you seem to think. A cough is vexatious, but in old persons is a great preservative. It is one of the forms in which the gout appears, and exercises and clears the lungs. I know actually two persons, no chickens, who are always very ill if they have no annual cough. You may imagine that I have made observations in plenty on the gout: yes, yes, I know its ways and its jesuitic evasions. I beg its pardon, it is a better soul than it appears to be; it is we that misuse it: if it does not appear with all its credentials, we take it for something else, and attempt to cure it. Being a remedy, and not a disease, it will not be cured; and it is better to let it have its way. If it is content to act the personage of a cough, pray humour it: it will prolong your life, if you do not contradict it and fling it somewhere else.

The Administration has received a total defeat in Ireland, which has probably saved us another civil war. Don't wonder that I am continually recollecting my father's *Quieta non movere*. I have never seen that maxim violated with impunity. They say, that in town a change in the Ministry is expected. I am not of that opinion; but, indeed, nobody can be more ignorant than I. I see nobody here but people attached to the Court, and who, however,

know no more than I do; and if I did see any of the other side, they would not be able to give me better information; nor am I curious.

A stranger event than a revolution in politics has happened at Paris. The Cardinal de Rohan is committed to the Bastile for forging the Queen's hand to obtain a collar of diamonds; I know no more of the story: but, as he is very gallant, it is guessed (*here* I mean) that it was for a present to some woman. These circumstances are little Apostolic, and will not prop the falling Church of Rome. They used to forge donations and decretals. This is a new manœuvre. Nor were Cardinals wont to be treated so cavalierly for peccadilloes. The House of Rohan is under a cloud: his Eminence's cousin, the Prince of Guemenè, was forced to fly, two or three years ago, for being the Prince of Swindlers. *Our* Nabobs are not treated so roughly; yet I doubt they collect diamonds still more criminally.

Your nephew will be sorry to hear that the Duke of Montrose's third grandson, Master William Douglas, died yesterday of a fever. These poor Montroses are most unfortunate persons! They had the comfort this spring of seeing Lord Graham[1] marry: the Duchess said, "I thought I should die of grief, and now I am ready to die of joy." Lady Graham soon proved with child, but soon miscarried; and the Duke and Duchess may not live to have the consolation of seeing an heir—for we must hope and make visions to the last! *I* am asking for samples of Ginori's porcelain at sixty-eight! Well! are not heirs to great names and families as frail foundations of happiness? and what signifies what baubles we pursue? Philosophers make systems, and we simpletons collections: and we are as wise as they—wiser perhaps, for we know that in a few years our rarities will be dispersed at an auction; and they flatter themselves that their reveries will be immortal, which has happened to no system yet. A curiosity may rise in value; a system is exploded.

Such reflections are applicable to politics, and make me look on them as equally nugatory. Last year Mr. Fox was burnt in effigy; now Mr. Pitt is. Oh! my dear Sir, it is all a farce! On *this day*, about an hundred years ago (look at my date), was

[1] The Marquis of Graham married the eldest daughter of the Earl of Ashburnham. His only sister, Lady Lucy, had been married to Archibald Douglas, the contested heir of the Duke of Douglas, and had died young, leaving three sons and a daughter. The Duke had been blind for thirty years, and the Duchess was paralytic.—WALPOLE.

born the wisest man[1] I have seen. He kept this country in peace for twenty years, and it flourished accordingly. He injured no man; was benevolent, good-humoured, and did nothing but the common necessary business of the State. Yet was he burnt in effigy too; and so traduced, that his name is not purified yet!—Ask why his memory is not in veneration? You will be told, from libels and trash, that he was *the Grand Corrupter*.—What! did he corrupt the nation to make it happy, rich, and peaceable? Who was oppressed during his administration? Those saints Bolingbroke and Pulteney were kept out of the Paradise of the Court; ay, and the Pretender was kept out and was kept quiet. Sir Robert fell: a Rebellion ensued in four years, and the crown shook on the King's head. The nation, too, which had been tolerably corrupted before his time, and which, with all its experience and with its eyes opened, has not cured itself of being corrupt, is not quite so prosperous as in the day of that man, who, it seems, poisoned its morals. Formerly it was the most virtuous nation on earth!

Under Henry VIII. and his children there was no persecution, no fluctuation of religion: their Ministers shifted their faith four times, and were sincere honest men! There was no servility, no flattery, no contempt of the nation abroad, under James I. No tyranny under Charles I. and Laud; no factions, no civil war! Charles II., however, brought back all the virtues and morality, which, somehow or other, were missing! His brother's was a still more blessed reign, though in a different way! King William was disturbed and distressed by no contending factions, and did not endeavour to bribe them to let him pursue his great object of humbling France! The Duke of Marlborough was not overborne in a similar and more glorious career by a detestable Cabal!—and if Oxford and Bolingbroke did remove him, from the most patriot motives, they, good men! used no corruption! Twelve Peerages showered at once, to convert the House of Lords, were no bribes; nor was a shilling issued for secret services; nor would a member of either House have received it!

Sir R. Walpole came, and, strange to tell, found the whole Parliament, and every Parliament, at least a great majority of every Parliament, ready to take his money. For what?—to undo their country! —which, however, wickedly as he meant, and ready as they were to concur, he left in every respect in the condition he found it, except in being improved in trade, wealth, and tranquillity; till *its friends* who

[1] Sir Robert Walpole, first Earl of Orford, prime minister to George I. and II.—WALPOLE.

expelled him, had dipped their poor country in a war; which was far from mending its condition. Sir Robert died, foretelling a Rebellion, which happened in less than six months, and for predicting which he had been ridiculed: and in detestation of a maxim ascribed to him by his enemies, that *every man has his price*, the tariff of every Parliament since has been as well known as the price of beef and mutton; and the universal electors, who cry out against that traffic, are not a jot less vendible than their electors.—Was not Sir Robert Walpole an abominable Minister?

29th.

P.S. The man who certainly provoked Ireland *to think*, is dead—Lord Sackville.[1]

30th.

I see, by the Gazette, that Lord Cowper's pinchbeck principality is allowed. I wonder his Highness does not desire the Pope to make one of his sons a bishop *in partibus infidelium*.

2365. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Aug. 29, 1785.

It is flattering, and too flattering to me, Madam, to be supposed the author of the 'Letters of Literature.' The writer has much more variety of knowledge, and of useful knowledge, and a sounder understanding than I have; though I do not think that even thirty years ago I should have written so rashly as he has done, nor so fantastically. Far was it ever from my thoughts to admire Dr. Akenside, (and to commend him in a work that excommunicates imitators!) or to depreciate Boileau, or not to think Moliere a genius of the first water. Who upon earth has written such perfect comedies? for the 'Careless Husband' is but one—the 'Nonjuror' was built on the 'Tartuffe;' and if the 'Man of Mode' and 'Vanbrugh' are excellent, they are too indelicate—and Congreve, who beats all for wit, is not always natural; still less, simple. In fact I disagree with Mr. Heron, as often as I subscribe to him; and though I am an enthusiast to original genius, I cannot forget that there are two classes of authors to be venerated; they who invent, and they who perfect: who has been so original as to exclude improvements?

[1] Lord George Sackville Germaine, third son of Lionel, [first] Duke of Dorset, who, when secretary to his father, when lord-lieutenant of Ireland, gave rise, by his haughty behaviour, to the factions that have ever since disturbed that country, and at last shaken off its submission to this country.—Walpole.

Well, Madam, but I not only am not the author of the 'Letters,' but, *upon my veracity*, I never saw a line of them, nor knew such a work was in embryo, till it was left at my house in full impression.

Should a doubt remain with any man, (your Ladyship I flatter myself will not question my truth,) I will give him an irrecusable proof of my not having had a hand in these Letters, if he will have patience to wait for it; and that is, that the author will write better than he has done twenty years after I shall be underground. In short, it is a capacity that will improve by maturity, for it will be corrected by opponents; if it is not hardened into the defence of paradoxes by defending them too ingeniously; as was the misfortune of Rousseau, who might have excelled by writing good sense, but found that there was a shorter path to celebrity, by climbing the precipice of absurdity.

I cannot make the same excuse for the pious editors of Dr. Johnson's 'Prayers:' see what it is to have friends too honest! How could men be such idiots as to execute such a trust? One laughs at every page, and then the tears come into one's eyes when one learns what the poor being suffered, who even suspected his own madness? One seems to be reading the diary of an old almswoman; and, in fact, his religion was not a step higher in its kind. Johnson had all the bigotry of a monk, and all the folly and ignorance too. He sets himself penances of reading two hundred verses of the Bible per day; proposes to learn high Dutch and Italian at past sixty, and at near seventy *begins* to think of examining the proofs (p. 160) of that religion which he had believed so implicitly. So anile was his faith, that on a fast-day he reproaches himself with putting a little milk into his coffee inadvertently! Can one check a smile when, in his old age, one might say his dotage, he tried to read Vossius on Baptism?—No wonder he could only *try!*—but one laughs out, when about a dozen years before his death, he confesses he had never yet read the 'Apocrypha,' though when a boy he had heard the story of 'Bel and the Dragon.' I wonder he did not add, and of 'Jack the Giant-killer'—for such blind faith might easily have confounded the impressions of his first childhood, which lasted uninterrupted to his second.

Methinks this specimen, and 'Rousseau's Confessions,' should be lessons against keeping journals, which poor Johnson thought such an excellent nostrum for a good life. How foolish might we all appear, if we registered every delirium! Johnson certainly had

strong sense at intervals—of how little use was it to himself!—but what drivellers are his disciples, who think they honour him by laying open his every weakness!

If the Cardinal de Rohan has any biographers, or *sincere friends*, the narrative will be very different. He is in the Bastile for forging the Queen's signature to obtain a collar of diamonds: it is supposed for a present to some woman, for his Eminence is very gallant. He is out of luck; he might not have been sent to Newgate here for using the Queen's name to get diamonds.

Lady Waldegrave, I flatter myself, is very well, Madam: she is at Navestock.

2366. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 17, 1785.

I DID conclude, Madam, that the shooting campaign being opened, you would be pitching your tents in Northamptonshire. Joseph II., who is as keen a sportsman as Lord Ossory, is going to shoot in Holland; Lord Rodney, who is just arrived from Spa, brings, that forty thousand men are on their march. Others add, that this imperial murderer is in danger from a swelling in his side—I hope he will die soon! His death would save two hundred thousand lives to Europe at least.

A thousand thanks to your Ladyship for the communication of Lady Ravensworth's letter, which I return. She has expressed in two words the idea that I have tried to give you in many, of Lady Euston's disposition: *calm sweetness and good sense* describe her exactly. I hope they will always make her worthy of Lady Ravensworth's goodness and Lord Euston's partiality. Mr. Fitzpatrick's for me is not so justly founded; yet I am flattered by it, as perhaps one always is, when rated too highly, at least that is the common opinion; though I confess I imagine that I am humbled in my own eyes, when I feel conscious of not deserving what is said of me.

Will not humility look affected, Madam, when in the same breath I ask how I may send you a new book printed here, which might blow up some fumes of vanity in a head that had not been so severely disciplined by the owner as mine. It is the translation of my 'Essay on Modern Gardens' by the Duc de Nivernois. I believe I mentioned it to your Ladyship. You will find it a most beautiful piece of French, of the genuine French spoken by the Duc de la

Rochefoucauld and Madame de Sévigné, and not the metaphysical galimatias of La Harpe and Thomas, &c., which Madame du Deffand protested she did not understand. The versions of Milton and Pope are wonderfully exact and poetic and elegant, and the fidelity of the whole translation, extraordinary. Some passages, not quite tender to his country, I was surprised that he did not cashier.

Of the Cardinal de Rohan I know nothing new, but that he absolutely now denies the charge. Indeed I am not at all *au fait* of the story; but I hear that Gray, the celebrated cutler, happening to be lately at Paris, was near being sent to the Bastile, as they suspected he was concerned in transmitting some of the stolen jewels, which are in England. Some say the whole was a plot of the Queen and Mons. de Breteuil, her creature—but how or why, I am ignorant.

Have you heard the history of our Madame de Maintenon? *There* I am of the best authority: I know many particulars from her own mouth. In short, *La Veuve* Delany, not Scarron, sent her woman to Windsor to get by heart the ichnography of the hotel granted to her. When she had made herself mistress of details, she went to dine at the White Hart. She was recalled by a page to Miss Goldsworthy, who told her it was his Majesty's command that she should bring down nothing but her lady's clothes and the boxes of her maids, for Louis le Grand is very considerate: she must bring no plate, china, linen, wine, &c.; all would be ready; and, when exhausted, she must not acquaint Mrs. Delany, but the aforesaid page. Louis himself pointed out where Mdlle. Daubigny, the great niece, should sleep, "and that room her nephew may use." When the new favourite arrived, Louis himself was at the door to hand her out of the chaise; there ends my journal. Others say that after a short visit, *elle le renvoyoit triste, mais point désespéré*, Lady Harcourt will be as jealous as the Montespan was.

My own history and gazette will both be very brief. Dr. Burney and his daughter, Evelina-Cecilia, have passed a day and a half with me. He is lively and agreeable; she half-and-half sense and modesty, which possess her so entirely, that not a cranny is left for affectation or pretension. Oh! Mrs. Montagu; you are not above half as accomplished.

Next, I have been two days in town to meet Mr. Conway and Lady Aylesbury. We went to see the Prince's new palace in Pall

Mall;[1] and were charmed. It will be the most perfect in Europe. There is an august simplicity that astonished me. You cannot call it magnificent; it is the taste and propriety that strike. Every ornament is at a proper distance, and not one too large, but all delicate and new, with more freedom and variety than Greek ornaments; and, though probably borrowed from the Hotel de Condé and other new palaces, not one that is not rather classic than French. As Gobert, who was a cook, and who was going to play the devil at Chatsworth and painted the old pilasters of the court there pea-green, designed the decorations, I expected a more tawdry assemblage of fantastic vagaries than in Mrs. Cornelys's masquerade-rooms. I beg his pardon—the Black Prince would not have blushed to banquet his royal prisoner in so modest a dwelling. There are three most spacious apartments, all looking on the lovely garden, a terreno, the state apartment, and an attic. The portico, vestibule, hall, and staircase will be superb, and, to my taste, full of perspectives; the jewel of all is a small music-room, that opens into a green recess and winding walk of the garden. In all the fairy tales you have been, you never was in so pretty a scene, Madam: I forgot to tell you how admirably all the carving, stucco, and ornaments are executed; but whence the money is to come I conceive not—all the tin mines in Cornwall would not pay a quarter. How sick one shall be after this chaste palace, of Mr. Adam's gingerbread and sippets of embroidery!

You have heard of all the late deaths and self-murders to be sure, Madam. I am very sorry for my cousin, Edward Conway, who was a most amiable young man, but his case has long been thought desperate. His sister, Lady Bel, is going to be married to a Mr. Hatton, in Ireland.

I shall divert you more by my conclusion than by this long letter, though it may serve, as you are in the woods, and I am alone in a dark wet evening, and therefore will make no excuses. Well! but my conclusion; oh! Sir Harry Englefield told me of a new parody of the Christcross row, of which he could remember but the first line, and I have forgotten the author; but that first line is worth a whole poem. You recollect, Madam, don't you? that

"A was an archer, and he shot a frog,"

[1] Carlton House—altered and enlarged by Henry Holland—pulled down, 1826.—Cunningham.

what think you of—

"A was an archer—and painted her face!"

What a crop of new wits and new poets we have in our caducity? Old people, they say, admire nothing but what was flourishing in their youth; I am sure, in my youth, there was nothing like the present constellation. Once in a year or two, Pope, after many throes was delivered of an Imitation of Horace, and Swift now and then sold you a bargain in short verses; for the rest of our time we lived upon Thomson's and Mallet's blank tragedies, and Lord Lyttelton's squirted-out ballads to Delia no better than what are sung at Vauxhall. I hope this revival of wit is not lightning before death; nay, I do not recollect that other tottering empires threw out the brightest sparks at their extinction—*Speriamo!*

2367. TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 17, 1785.

You are too modest, Sir, in asking my advice on a point on which you could have no better guide than your own judgment. If I presume to give you my opinion, it is from zeal for your honour. I think it would be below you to make a regular answer to anonymous scribblers in a Magazine: you had better wait to see whether any formal reply is made to your book, and whether by any avowed writer; to whom, if he writes sensibly and decently, you may condescend to make an answer. Still, as you say you have been misquoted, I should not wish you to be quite silent, though I should like better to have you turn such enemies into ridicule. A foe who misquotes you, ought to be a welcome antagonist. He is so humble as to confess, when he censures what you have *not* said, that he cannot confute what you have said; and he is so kind as to furnish you with an opportunity of proving him a liar, as you may refer to your book to detect him.

This is what I would do; I would specify, in the same Magazine in which he has attacked you, your real words, and those he has imputed to you; and then appeal to the equity of the reader. You may guess that the shaft comes from somebody whom you have censured; and thence you may draw a fair conclusion, that you had been in the right to laugh at one who was reduced to put his own words into your mouth before he could find fault with them; and, having so done whatever indignation he has excited in the reader must

recoil on himself, as the offensive passages will come out to have been his own, not yours. You might even begin with loudly condemning the words or thoughts imputed to you, as if you retracted them; and then, as if you turned to your book, and found that you had said no such thing there as what you was ready to retract, the ridicule would be doubled on your adversary.

Something of this kind is the most I would stoop to; but I would take the utmost care not to betray a grain of more anger than is implied in contempt and ridicule. Fools can only revenge themselves by provoking; for then they bring you to a level with themselves. The good sense of your work will support it; and there is scarce a reason for defending it, but, by keeping up a controversy, to make it more noticed; for the age is so idle and indifferent, that few objects strike, unless parties are formed for or against them. I remember many years ago advising some acquaintance of mine, who were engaged in the direction of the Opera, to raise a competition between two of their singers, and have papers written pro and con.; for then numbers would go to clap and hiss the rivals respectively, who would not go to be pleased with the music.

2368. TO GEORGE COLMAN, ESQ.

SIR: *Strawberry Hill, Sept.* 19, 1785.

I BEG your acceptance of a little work just printed here; and I offer it as a token of my gratitude, not as pretending to pay you for your last present. A translation, however excellent, from a very inferior Horace,[1] would be a most inadequate return; but there is so much merit in the enclosed version, the language is so pure, and the imitations of our poets so extraordinary, so much more faithful and harmonious than I thought the French tongue could achieve, that I flatter myself you will excuse my troubling you with an old performance of my own, when newly dressed by a master-hand. As, too, there are not a great many copies printed, and those only for presents, I have particular pleasure in making you one of the earliest compliments,

And am, Sir,
Your most obliged and obedient, humble servant,
HOR. WALPOLE.

[1] The Duc de Nivernois' translation of Walpole's 'Essay on Gardening.'—WRIGHT.

2369. TO THE EARL OF BUCHAN.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 23, 1785.

Your Lordship is too condescending when you incline to keep up a correspondence with one who can expect to maintain it but a short time, and whose intervals of health are resigned to idleness, not dedicated, as they have sometimes been, to literary pursuits; for what could I pursue with any prospect of accomplishment? or what avails it to store a memory that must lose faster than it acquires? Your Lordship's zeal for illuminating your country and countrymen is laudable, and you are young enough to make a progress; but a man who touches the verge of his sixty-eighth year ought to know that he is unfit to contribute to the amusement of more active minds. This consideration, my Lord, makes me much decline correspondence: having nothing new to communicate, I perceive that I fill my letters with apologies for having nothing to say.

If you can tap the secret stores of the Vatican, your Lordship will probably much enrich the treasury of letters. Rome may have preserved many valuable documents, as for ages intelligence from all parts of Europe centred there; but I conclude that they have hoarded little that might at any period lay open the share they had in most important transactions. History, indeed, is fortunate when even incidentally and collaterally it lights on authentic information.

Perhaps, my Lord, there is another repository, and nearer, which it would be worth while to endeavour to penetrate: I mean, the Scottish College at Paris. I have heard formerly, that numbers of papers, of various sorts, were transported at the Reformation to Spain and Portugal; but, if preserved there, they probably are not accessible *yet*. If they were, how puny, how diminutive, would all such discoveries, and others which we might call of far greater magnitude, be to those of Herschel, who puts up millions of covies of worlds at a beat! My conception is not ample enough to take in even a sketch of his glimpses; and, lest I should lose myself in attempting to follow his investigations, I recal my mind home, and apply it to reflect on what we thought we knew, when we imagined we knew something (which we deemed a vast deal) pretty correctly. Segrais, I think, it was, who said with much contempt, to a lady who talked of her star, "Your star! Madam, there are but two thousand stars in all; and do you imagine that you have a whole

one to yourself?" The foolish dame, it seems, was not more ignorant than Segrais himself. If our system includes twenty millions of worlds, the lady had as much right to pretend to a whole ticket as the philosopher had to treat her like a servant-maid who buys a chance for a day in a state lottery.

Stupendous as Mr. Herschel's investigations are, and admirable as are his talents, his expression of *our retired corner of the universe*, seems a little improper. When a little emmet, standing on its ant-hill, could get a peep into infinity, how could he think he saw *a corner* in it?—a retired corner? Is there a bounded side to infinitude? If there are twenty millions of worlds, why not as many, and as many, and as many more? Oh! one's imagination cracks! I long to bait within distance of home, and rest at the moon. Mr. Herschel will content me if he can discover thirteen provinces there, well inhabited by men and women, and protected by the law of nations:[1] that law, which was enacted by Europe for its own emolument, to the prejudice of the other three parts of the globe, and which bestows the property of whole realms on the first person who happens to espy them, who can annex them to the Crown of Great Britain, in lieu of those it has lost beyond the Atlantic.

I am very ignorant in astronomy, as ignorant as Segrais or the lady, and could wish to ask many questions; as, Whether our celestial globes must not be infinitely magnified? Our orreries, too, must not they be given to children, and new ones constructed, that will at least take in *our retired corner*, and all its outflying constellations? Must not that host of worlds be christened? Mr. Herschel himself has stood godfather for his Majesty to the new Sidus. His Majesty, thank God! has a numerous issue; but they and all the princes and princesses in Europe cannot supply appellations enough for twenty millions of new-born stars: no, though the royal progenies of Austria, Naples, and Spain, who have each two dozen saints for sponsors, should consent to split their bead-rolls of names among the foundlings. But I find I talk like an old nurse, and your Lordship at last will, I believe, be convinced that it is not worth your while to keep up a correspondence with a man in his dotage, merely because he has the honour of being, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient servant.

[1] The then thirteen united States of America.—WRIGHT.

2370. TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 30, 1785.

As soon, Sir, as I can see the lady, my friend, who is much acquainted with the Archbishop, I will try if she will ask his leave for you to see the books you mention in his Library, of which I will give her the list. I did ask Mr. Cambridge where Dr. Lort is; he told me, with the Bishop of Chester, and on an intended tour to the Lakes. I do not possess, nor ever looked into, one of the books you specify; nor Mabillon's 'Acta Sanctorum,' nor O'Flaherty's 'Ogygia.' My reading has been very idle, and trifling, and desultory; not that, perhaps, it has not been employed on authors as respectable as those you want to consult, nor that I had not rather read the deeds of sinners than *Acta Sanctorum*. I have no reverence but for sensible books, and consequently not for a great number; and had rather have read fewer than I have, than more. The rest may be useful on certain points, as they happen now to be to you; who, I am sure, would not read them for general use and pleasure, and are a very different kind of author. I shall like, I dare to say, anything you do write; but I am not overjoyed at your wading into the history of dark ages, unless you use it as a canvas to be embroidered with your own opinions, and episodes, and comparisons with more recent times. That is a most entertaining kind of writing. In general, I have seldom wasted time on the origin of nations, unless for an opportunity of smiling at the gravity of the author, or at the absurdity of the manners of those ages; for absurdity and bravery compose almost all the anecdotes we have of them, except the accounts of what they never did, nor thought of doing.

I have a real affection for Bishop Hoadley: he stands with me in lieu of what are called the Fathers; and I am much obliged to you for offering to lend me a book of his;[1] but, as my faith in him and his doctrines has long been settled, I shall not return to such grave studies, when I have so little time left, and desire only to pass it tranquilly, and without thinking of what I can neither propagate nor correct. When youth made me sanguine, I hoped mankind

[1] A collection of his small tracts and single sheets, presented by himself to Speaker Onslow. *Pinkerton's note*, in *Walpoliana*, ii. 34.—CUNNINGHAM.

might be set right. Now that I am very old, I sit down with this lazy maxim: that, unless one could cure men of being fools, it is to no purpose to cure them of any folly, as it is only making room for some other. Self-interest is thought to govern every man; yet, is it possible to be less governed by self-interest than men are in the aggregate? Do not thousands sacrifice even their lives for single men? Is not it an established rule in France, that every person in that kingdom should love every king they have in his turn? What government is formed for general happiness? Where is not it thought heresy by the majority, to insinuate that the felicity of one man ought not to be preferred to that of millions? Had not I better, at sixty-eight, leave men to these preposterous notions, than return to Bishop Hoadley, and sigh? Not but I have a heart-felt satisfaction when I hear that a mind as liberal as his, and who has dared to utter sacred truths, meets with approbation and purchasers of his work. You must not, however, flatter yourself, Sir, that all your purchasers are admirers. Some will buy your book, because they have heard of opinions in it that offend them, and because they want to find matter in it for abusing you. Let them: the more it is discussed, the more strongly will your fame be established. I commend you for scorning any artifice to puff your book, but you must allow me to hope it will be attacked.

I have another satisfaction in the sale of your book; it will occasion a second edition. What if, as you do not approve of confuting misquoters, you simply printed a list of their false quotations, referring to the identical sentences, at the end of your second edition? That will be preserving their infamy, which else would perish where it was born; and perhaps would deter others from similar forgeries. If any rational opponent staggers you on any opinion of yours, I would retract it; and that would be a second triumph. I am, perhaps, too impertinent and forward with advice: it is at best a proof of zeal; and you are under no obligation to follow my counsel. It is the weakness of old age to be apt to give advice; but I will fairly arm you against myself, by confessing that, when I was young, I was not apt to take any.

2371. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 4, 1785.

I DON'T love to transgress my monthly regularity; yet, as you must prefer facts to words, why should I write when I have nothing to tell you? The newspapers themselves in a peaceable autumn coin wonders from Ireland, or live on the accidents of the Equinox. They, the newspapers, have been in high spirits on the prospect of a campaign in Holland; but the Dutch, without pity for the gazetteers of Europe, are said to have submitted to the Emperor's terms: however, the intelligence-merchants may trust that *he* will not starve them long!

Your neighbour, the Queen of Sardinia, it seems, is dead: but, if there was anything to say about her, you must tell it to me, not I to you; for, till she died, I scarce knew she had been alive.

Our Parliament is put off till after Christmas; so, I have no more resource from domestic politics than from foreign wars. For my own particular, I desire neither. I live here in tranquillity and idleness, can content myself with trifles, and think the world is much the happier when it has nothing to talk of. Most people ask, "Is there any news?"—How can one want to know one does not know what? when anything has happened, one hears it.

There is one subject on which I wish I had occasion to write; I think it long since I heard how you go on: I flatter myself, as I have no letter from you or your nephew, prosperously. I should prefer a letter from him, that you may not have the trouble; and I shall make this the shorter, as a precedent for his not thinking more than a line necessary. The post does not insist on a certain quantity; it is content with being paid for whatever it carries—nay, is a little unreasonable, as it doubles its price for a cover that contains nothing but a direction: and now it is the fashion to curtail the direction as much as possible. Formerly, a direction was an academy of compliments: "To the most noble and my singularly respected friend," &c., &c.—and then, "Haste! haste, for your life, haste!"—Now, we have banished even the monosyllable *To!* Henry Conway,[1] Lord Hertford's son, who is very indolent, and has much humour, introduced that abridgement. Writing to a Mr. Tighe at the Temple, he directed his letter only thus: "T. Ti.,

[1] Second son of Francis Seymour Conway, first Earl of Hertford.—WALPOLE.

Temple,"—and it was delivered! Dr. Bentley was mightily flattered on receiving a letter superscribed "To Dr. Bentley in England." Times are altered; postmen are now satisfied with a hint. One modern retrenchment is a blessing; one is not obliged to study for an ingenious conclusion, as if writing an epigram—oh! no; nor to send compliments that never were delivered. I had a relation who always finished his letters with "his love to all that was near and dear to us," though he did not care a straw for me or any of his family. It was said of old Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, that she never put dots over her *i*'s, to save ink: how she would have enjoyed modern economy in that article! She would have died worth a thousand farthings more than she did—nay, she would have known exactly how many; as Sir Robert Brown[1] did, who calculated what he had saved by never having an orange or lemon on his sideboard. I am surprised that no economist has retrenched second courses, which always consist of the dearest articles, though seldom touched, as the hungry at least dine on the first. Mrs. Leneve,[2] one summer at Houghton, counted thirty-six turkey-pouts[3] that had been served up without being meddled with.

5th.

I had written thus far yesterday. This minute I receive your nephew's of Sept. 20th; it is not such an one by any means as I had wished for. He tells me, you have had a return of your disorder—indeed, he consoles me with your recovery; but I cannot in a moment shake off the impression of a sudden alarm, though the cause was ceased, nor can a second agitation calm a first on such shattered nerves as mine. My fright is over, but I am not com-

[1] A noted miser [died 1760; see vol. iii. p. 351], who raised a great fortune as a merchant at Venice, though his whole wealth, when he went thither, consisted in one of those vast wigs (a second-hand one, given to him) which were worn in the reign of Queen Anne, and which he sold for five guineas. He returned to England, very rich, in the reign of George II., with his wife [died 1782] and three daughters, who would have been great fortunes. The eldest, about eighteen, fell into a consumption, and, being ordered to ride, her father drew a map of the by-lanes about London, which he made the footman carry in his pocket and observe, that she might ride without paying a turnpike. When the poor girl was past recovery, Sir Robert sent for an undertaker, to cheapen her funeral, as she was not dead, and there was a possibility of her living. He went farther; he called his other daughters, and bade them curtsey to the undertaker, and promise to be his friends; and so they proved, for both died consumptive in two years.—WALPOLE.

[2] A lady who lived with Sir Robert Walpole, to take care of his youngest daughter, Lady Maria, after her mother's death. After Sir Robert's death, and Lady Mary's marriage with Mr. Churchill, she lived with Mr. H. Walpole to her death.—WALPOLE.

[3] As the sons of rajahs in India are called Rajah Pouts, and as turkeys came from the East, quære if they were not called Turkey-pouts, as an Eastern diminutive?—WALPOLE.

posed. I cannot begin a new letter, and therefore send what I had written. I will only add, what you may be sure I feel, ardent wishes for your perfect health, and grateful thanks to your nephew for his attention—he is rather your son; but indeed he is Gal.'s son, and that is the same thing. How I love him for his attendance on you! and how very kind he is in giving me accounts of you! I hope he will continue; and I ask it still more for your sake than for my own, that you may not think of writing yourself. If he says but these words, "My uncle has had no return of his complaint," I shall be satisfied—satisfied!—I shall be quite happy! Indeed, indeed, I ask no more.

2372. TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 6, 1785.

I WONDERED I did not hear from you, as I concluded you returned. You have made me good amends by the entertaining story of your travels. If I were not too disjointed for long journeys, I should like to see much of what you have seen; but if I had the agility of Vestris, I would not purchase all that pleasure for my eyes at the expense of my unsociability, which could not have borne the hospitality you experienced. It was always death to me, when I did travel England, to have lords and ladies receive me and show me their castles, instead of turning me over to their housekeeper: it hindered my seeing anything, and I was the whole time meditating my escape; but Lady Aylesbury and you are not such sensitive plants, nor shrink and close up if a stranger holds out a hand.

I don't wonder you was disappointed with Jarvis's windows at New College; I had foretold their miscarriage. The old and the new are as mismatched as an orange and a lemon, and destroy each other; nor is there room enough to retire back and see half of the new; and Sir Joshua's washy 'Virtues' make the 'Nativity' a dark spot from the darkness of the Shepherds, which happened, as I knew it would, from most of Jarvis's colours not being transparent.

I have not seen the improvements at Blenheim. I used to think it one of the ugliest places in England; a giant's castle, who had laid waste all the country round him. Everybody now allows the merit of [Capability] Brown's achievements there.[1]

[1] "I took," says Hannah More, "a very agreeable lecture from my friend Mr. Brown,

Of all your survey I wish most to see Beau Desert.[1] Warwick Castle and Stowe I know by heart. The first I had rather possess than any seat upon earth: not that I think it the most beautiful of all, though charming, but because I am so intimate with all its proprietors for the last thousand years.

I have often and often studied the new plan of Stowe: it is pompous; but though the wings are altered, they are not lengthened. Though three parts of the edifices in the garden are bad, they enrich that insipid country, and the vastness pleases me more than I can defend.

I rejoice that your jaunt has been serviceable to Lady Aylesbury. The *Charming man*[2] is actually with me; but neither he nor I can keep our promise incontinently. He expects two sons of his brother Sir William, whom he is to pack up and send to the Pères de l'Oratoire at Paris. I expect Lord and Lady Waldegrave to-morrow, who are to pass a few days with me; but both the Charming man and I will be with you soon. I have no objection to a wintry visit: as I can neither ride nor walk, it is more comfortable when most of my time is passed within doors. If I continue perfectly well, as I am, I shall not settle in town till after Christmas: there will not be half-a-dozen persons there for whom I care a straw.

I know nothing at all. The peace between the Austrian harpy and the frogs is made. They were stout, and preferred being gobbled to parting with their money. At last, France offered to pay the money for them. The harpy blushed—for the first time—and would not take it; but signed the peace, and will plunder somebody else.

Have you got Boswell's most absurd enormous book?[3] The best thing in it is a *bon-mot* of Lord Pembroke.[4] The more one learns

in his art, and he promised to give me taste by inoculation. I am sure he has a charming one; and he illustrates everything he says about gardening by some literary or grammatical allusion. He told me he compared his art to literary composition. 'Now, *there*,' said he, pointing his finger, 'I make a comma; and there,' pointing to another spot, 'where a more decided turn is proper, I make a colon: at another part (where an interruption is desirable to break the view), a parenthesis—now a full stop; and then I begin another subject.'" *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 26.—WRIGHT.

[1] Lord Paget's seat in Staffordshire.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] Edward Jerningham the poet. See p. 216 and p. 278.—CUNNINGHAM.

[3] Boswell's 'Journal of his Tour to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland with Dr. Johnson, in the autumn of 1773.'—WRIGHT.

[4] "Lord Pembroke said once to me at Wilton, that Dr. Johnson's sayings would not appear so extraordinary, were it not for his *bow-wow* way." *Boswell's Journal.*—WRIGHT.

of Johnson, the more preposterous assemblage he appears of strong sense, of the lowest bigotry and prejudices, of pride, brutality, fretfulness, and vanity; and Boswell is the ape of most of his faults, without a grain of his sense. It is the story of a mountebank and his zany.

I forgot to say, that I wonder how, with your turn, and knowledge, and enterprise, in scientific exploits, you came not to visit the Duke of Bridgewater's operations; or did you omit them, because I should not have understood a word you told me? Adieu!

2373. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 27, 1785.

You are very gracious, Madam, in calling yourself in debt, when I was in yours too: but I have had the best or the worst reason in the world for not writing—the having nothing to say. I know nothing, do nothing, but write explanations of my house not being visible after the month of October. I have had an intercourse of letters with Sir Ralph Payne about some Poles who would have ridden into my hall, sabre in hand, as if it was the Diet of Grodno, and they a people still; but I suppose they considered that we are not!

Though these invasions, which keep me in hot water for five months, rankle in my mind, I would not torment your Ladyship with them if I had not occasion to beg your mediation. As this month of October is the only comfortable one I have (and I cannot reckon on many more), I am determined to keep it to myself, and have printed rules; nay, on the 1st, I unfurnish it as much as I can for an excuse for not showing it. To my sorrow, Lady Lansdowne wrote to me after that day for a ticket for some of her acquaintance. Had it been for herself, I should have begged the honour of showing it to her myself, a dispensation I reserve in my own breast for those I respect, as I most certainly do Lady Lansdowne. Unluckily I had but two days before refused a ticket to Marchioness Grey for herself, and did not offer to be my own housekeeper, as I owe no particular attentions to the House of Yorke. However, I could not personally affront a lady, as I should have done if I had obeyed Lady Lansdowne, and therefore trusted her Ladyship would excuse me, which I beg, Madam, you will repeat to her, and tell her my case and concern.

Now, Madam, do you wonder I do not *write?* Instead of lamentations on Kirby, I can think of nothing but the groans of Strawberry: in verity, instead of *writing*, could time be recalled, I never would be an author. I am sick of my own trumpery, and if humility were not the mask of vanity, I would tell you why—but they would be all vain or selfish reasons—and so no matter what they are.

I condole with your Ladyship and Lady Ravensworth on the loss of the good General, and I am glad Lord Ossory tripped up the blacklegs.

I have had, and still have, a sad scene before my eyes; my poor honest servant, David, is dying of a dropsy, has been tapped twice, suffers dreadfully, wishes it over, and does not care for the trouble of another operation—so if Queens or Dukes of Wirtemberg come to see my house, nobody will send them away! What a wonderful contrast between poor David and Dubois, a valet-de-chambre of Louis Treize, who has given an account of that monarch's death, which has just been lent to me! After receiving the Sacrament *avec de grosses larmes*, the slave adds, and "*des élévations d'esprit, qui faisoient connoître évidemment un commerce d'amour entre leurs Majestés Divines et humaines.*" I suppose the poor reptile expected that Louis would in heaven take place of the first prince of the blood! When human folly, or rather French folly, can go so far, it would be trifling to instance a much fainter silliness; but do you know, Madam, that the fashion now is, not to have portraits but of an *eye?* They say, "Lord! don't you know it?" A Frenchman is come over to paint eyes here!

I am not so partial as not to like the retort of Charles V. I would not advise Mr. Mason to go to Court, if Charles were living; nor will I go to Vienna. When General Johnstone returned a fortnight ago, I told him I hoped he had left everybody well in Germany but the Emperor. The postman stays—not that I can pretend to have a word more to say.

2374. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Berkeley Square, Oct. 30, 1785.

I AM a contradiction, yet very naturally so; I wish you not to write yourself, and yet am delighted when I receive a letter in your own hand: however, I don't desire it should be of four pages, like

this last of the 11th. When I have had the gout, I have always written by proxy. You will make me ashamed, if you don't use the precedent. Your account of yourself is quite to my satisfaction. I approve, too, of your not dining with your company. Since I must be old and have the gout, I have long turned those disadvantages to my own account, and plead them to the utmost when they will save me from doing anything I dislike. I am so lame, or have such a sudden pain, when I do not care to do what is proposed to me! Nobody can tell how rapidly the gout may be come, or be gone again; and then it is so pleasant to have had the benefit, and none of the anguish!

I did send you a line last week in the cover of a letter to Lady Craven, which I knew would sufficiently tell your quickness how much I shall be obliged to you for any attentions to her. I thought her at Paris, and was surprised to hear of her at Florence. She has, I fear, been *infinitamente* indiscreet; but what is that to you or me? She is very pretty, has parts, aud is good-natured to the greatest degree; has not a grain of malice or mischief (almost always the associates, in women, of tender hearts), and never has been an enemy but to herself. For that ridiculous woman Madame Piozzi, and t'other more impertinent one,[1] of whom I never heard before, they are like the absurd English dames with whom we used to divert ourselves when I was at Florence. As to your little knot of poets, I do not hold the cocks higher than the hens; nor would I advise them to repatriate. We have at present here a most incomparable set, not exactly known by their names, but who, till the dead of summer, kept the town in a roar, and, I suppose, will revive by the meeting of Parliament. They have poured forth a torrent of odes, epigrams, and part of an imaginary epic poem, called the 'Rolliad,' with a commentary and notes, that is as good as the 'Dispensary' and 'Dunciad,' with more ease. These poems are all anti-ministerial, and the authors[3] very young men, and little known or heard of before. I would send them, but you would want too many keys: and indeed I want some myself; for, as there are continually allusions to Parliamentary speeches and events, they are often obscure to me till I get them explained; and besides, I do not know

[1] Widow of Mr. Thrale, on whose death she married an Italian fiddler, and was then at Florence with him.—WALPOLE.

[2] Another English gentlewoman also there.—WALPOLE.

[3] The principal were Mr. Ellis, Mr. Laurence, a lawyer, Col. Richard Fitzpatrick, and John Townshend, second son of George Viscount Townshend.—WALPOLE.

several of the satirised heroes even by sight: however, the poetry and wit make amends, for they are superlative.

News I have none, wet or dry, to send you: politics are stagnated, and pleasure is not come to town. You may be sure I am glad that Cæsar is baffled; I neither honour nor esteem him. If he is preferring his nephew [1] to his brother, it is using the latter as ill as the rest of the world.

Mrs. Damer is again set out for the Continent to-day, to avoid the winter, which is already begun severely; we have had snow twice. Till last year, I never knew snow in October since I can remember; which is no short time. Mrs. Damer has taken with her her cousin Miss Campbell, daughter of poor Lady William, whom you knew, and who died last year. Miss Campbell has always lived with Lady Aylesbury, and is a very great favourite and a very sensible girl. I believe they will proceed to Italy, but it is not certain. If they come to Florence, the Great-Duke should beg Mrs. Damer to give him something of her statuary; and it would be a greater curiosity than anything in his Chamber of Painters. She has executed several marvels since you saw her; and has lately carved two colossal heads for the bridge at Henley, which is the most beautiful one in the world, next to the Ponte di Trinità,[2] and was principally designed by her father, General Conway. Lady Spencer [3] draws—incorrectly indeed, but has great expression. Italy probably will stimulate her, and improve her attention. You see we blossom in ruin! Poetry, painting, statuary, architecture, music, linger here,

on this sea-encircled coast, (*Gray*)

as if they knew not whither to retreat farther for shelter, and would not trust to the despotic patronage of the Attilas,[4] Alarics, Amalasuntas of the North! They leave such heroic scourges to be decorated by the Voltaires and D'Alemberts of the Gauls, or wait till by the improvement of balloons they may be transported to some of those millions of worlds that Herschel is discovering every day; for this new Columbus has thrown open the great gates of astronomy,

[1] The emperor was supposed to be endeavouring to get the eldest son of his brother the Great-Duke elected King of the Romans.—WALPOLE.

[2] At Florence.—WALPOLE.

[3] Lavinia Bingham, daughter of Charles Lord Lucan, and wife of John second Earl Spencer, with whom she was then in Italy.—WALPOLE.

[4] Frederic II., King of Prussia, Joseph II., Emperor of Germany, Catherine II., Empress of Russia, who had usurped and divided great part of Poland.—WALPOLE.

and neither Spanish inquisitors nor English Nabobs will be able to torture and ransack the new regions and their inhabitants. Adieu!

2375. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Nov. 16, 1785.

By coming hither an hour ago, I am so fortunate as to be able to thank your Ladyship instantly for your most kind letter on Lady Euston's delivery. I am still more pleased with the very proper manner in which it was notified to you. Lady Horatia, who is with her sister, tells Miss Keppel that Lord Euston is delighted with his daughter; it was for a daughter he wished; there certainly is no danger of the line of Fitzroy failing for want of an heir male.

I am in debt, Madam, for another letter which I received at Park-place, where I have been for some days; but Park-place furnished me with no more events than Strawberry Hill: and I must own that when I can tell nothing that will amuse, which seldom happens to me now, living as I do out of the world, and having outlived so many of my friends and acquaintance, I am shy of writing; for why should one write when one has little or nothing to say? I cannot *compose* letters like Pliny and Pope.

Your Ladyship's query I can answer by heart. Richard Duke of York, who was supposed murdered in the Tower, was, though an infant, married solemnly by his father, Edward IV., to Anne-Mowbray, Duchess of Norfolk, and the heiress of that house, and still more a baby than himself. She died very soon; probably, though I could never find exactly when, before the King, for it was in right of having married, or having been son of, her aunt (I forget which), that John Howard was created Duke of Norfolk by Richard III., and was the Jocky of Norfolk slain at Bosworth. You now see, Madam, why I know so much of the matter off-hand.

I am come to town for two or three days on a little private business of my own, and to quit a horrid scene. My poor honest Swiss, David, has been dying of a dropsy for seven or eight months, and has suffered dreadfully. I have seen him but once since my return, as he has been speechless, and I flatter myself senseless, since last Saturday; but he groans shockingly; and though I trusted to hearing he was gone this morning, he was still alive, but motionless. I shall not go back to Strawberry till he is buried. As your Ladyship says Lady Ravensworth is in town, I shall endeavour to pay my

duty to her. I am much pleased with the good old General's legacy; and don't wonder your Ladyship is so, though it will scarce purchase half an acre of a modern hat.

As the ashes of the Cecils are rekindling, perhaps a Phœnix may arise! I remember Lord Hervey saying that everything degenerated and dwindled, and instancing in the last Lord Salisbury, who he said was the cucumber of Burleigh. Well then, as matters, when they can go no lower, may mount again, who knows what may happen, Madam? Some melon-seeds, that have been neglected and not cultivated in the hothouse of a great family, may fall on good ground, and bring forth brave melons. Thus my father sprung from a granddaughter of Lord Burleigh, and then dwindled to the Gerkin —H. W.

2376. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Friday, 18*th.*

As I could mean *only* respect, Madam, on your Ladyship's telling me Lady Ravensworth was in town, I am glad you have prevented my troubling her with a visit, which I should have made this evening, and which, as I return to Strawberry to-morrow, will be as well made by the intention. My breeding *de vieille cour* makes me attend to certain ceremonials; but the slightest dispensation quiets the etiquette of my conscience, especially if it can give any kind of disturbance to anybody.

A marriage is agreed on between Mr. Pratt and Miss Molesworth; but, as there is still a moment between the cup and *her* lip, it may not be recorded in fate's parish-register.

My poor servant [David] died in a few hours after I left him. Mr. Morrice, I hear, is dead, too, which must be as great a deliverance.

2377. TO THE EARL OF CHARLEMONT.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 23, 1785.

As your Lordship has given me this opportunity, I cannot resist saying, what I was exceedingly tempted to mention two or three years ago, but had not the confidence. In short, my Lord, when the Order of St. Patrick was instituted, I had a mind to hint to your Lordship that it was exactly the moment for seizing an occasion that has been

irretrievably lost to this country. When I was at Paris, I found in the convent of Les Grands Augustins three vast chambers filled with the portraits (and their names and titles beneath) of all the knights of St. Esprit, from the foundation of the Order. Every new knight, with few exceptions, gives his own portrait on his creation. Of the Order of St. Patrick, I think but one founder is dead yet; and his picture perhaps may be retrieved. I will not make any apology to so good a patriot as your Lordship, for proposing a plan that tends to the honour of his country, which I will presume to call mine too, as it is both by *union* and my affection for it. I should wish the name of the painter inscribed too, which would excite emulation in your artists. But it is unnecessary to dilate on the subject to your Lordship; who, as a patron of the arts, as well as a patriot, will improve on my imperfect thoughts, and, if you approve of them, can give them stability. I have the honour to be, my Lord, &c.

2378. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 4, 1785.

You and I, my dear Sir, have long out-friendshipped Orestes and Pylades.[1] Now I think we are like Castor and Pollux; when one rises, t'other sets; when you can write, I cannot. I have got a very sharp attack of the gout in my right hand, which escaped last year, but is paying its arrears now: however, I hope the assessment will not be general on all my limbs. Your being so well is a great collateral comfort to me. The behaviour of your nephew is charming and unparalleled: by the way, so is Mr. Croft's;[2] and, in a money-getting man, very extraordinary. I don't mean, that I expect economy *for* another from a prodigal.

For the Signora,[3] who has been so absurd as to quarrel with your nephew, all I will say in a letter is, that it is a kind of indiscretion I should not have expected from her. I will take no notice of knowing it; but I shall drop her correspondence, as I had done at Paris. You know I tried to serve her; but, alas! how often are you punished by my most harmless intentions! I wonder how our Ministers abroad have patience with the extravagances of their

[1] Said twice before.—CUNNINGHAM.
[2] A banker.—WALPOLE.
[3] An English lady mentioned in the preceding letter [to Mann].—WALPOLE.

compatriots: I have not, I am sure. Well! I will plant her there with a slight alteration of the two last lines of 'Paradise Lost:'—

> The world is all before her, where to choose
> Her place of rest—*Im*-providence her guide.

On your political rumours[1] I shall not descant, though they announce, on one side, an intention of opening a vast scene; and, on the other, a determination to embarrass it: but, as I recede from life, I look at distant objects through the diminishing end of a telescope, which reduces them to a point. On this side of our asterism I know nothing. My own chamber, and the next, contain my whole map; and two sides of a sheet of paper are volume enough for its history. Adieu!

2379. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 13, 1785.

I HAVE this minute received yours of the 25th of last month; and, though I cannot write with my own hand, (which, however, is vastly better, and getting well,) I must say a few words. You surely know me too well to suppose for a minute that anything could hurt you or your nephew in my affection or esteem; much less the ravings of such an *aventurière*. I have received two letters from her on the subject, and I can want no other evidence to condemn her. Her behaviour is little more than absurd, and her Knight's interference *y met le comble*.

You may depend upon it, I shall totally drop the correspondence, but shall never own that I know a word of the matter; and I beg that you and your nephew will say that I never mentioned the affair to you, particularly not to the person[2] whom the dame acquainted that she had complained to me. I have reasons for what I say, which I cannot explain in a letter.

I am overjoyed to see your writing so firm, and to hear you again dine at table; but I beseech you not to abate any attention to your health. My surgeon (for I have been obliged to have one for my

[1] A report that the Empress of Russia was going to send a fleet against Constantinople, and that the kings of Spain and France had enjoined the King of Naples to shut his ports against it. – WALPOLE.

[2] An English lord, who happened to be then at Florence, and of whom Mr. Walpole had no favourable opinion.—WALPOLE.

hand) has wanted me for these two days to go out and take the air; but I have positively refused, for I got two relapses last winter by venturing out too soon. I had rather be confined ten days more than are necessary, than recommence. I have great patience whenever the fit comes; but a relapse puts me into despair. I must finish, for your letter did not arrive till past seven; mine must go to the office by nine; and, about eight, people drop in to me: but I would not lose a minute before I answered yours.

2380. TO LADY BROWNE.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 14, 1785.

I AM extremely obliged to your Ladyship for your kind letter; and, though I cannot write myself, I can dictate a few lines. This has not been a regular fit of the gout, but a worse case: one of my fingers opened with a deposit of chalk,[1] and brought on gout, and both together an inflammation and swelling almost up to my shoulder. In short, I was forced to have a surgeon, who has managed me so judiciously, that both the inflammation and swelling are gone; and nothing remains but the wound in my finger, which will heal as soon as all the chalk is discharged. My surgeon wishes me to take the air; but I am so afraid of a relapse, that I have not yet consented.

My poor old friend [Mrs. Clive] is a great loss; but it did not much surprise me, and the manner comforts me. I had played at cards with her at Mrs. Gostling's three nights before I came to town, and found her extremely confused, and not knowing what she did: indeed, I perceived something of the sort before, and had found her much broken this autumn. It seems, that the day after I saw her, she went to General Lister's burial and got cold, and had been ill for two or three days. On the Wednesday morning she rose to have her bed made; and while sitting on the bed, with her maid by her, sunk down at once, and died without a pang or a groan. Poor Mr. Raftor is struck to the greatest degree, and for some days would not

[1] "Neither years nor sufferings," writes Hannah More to her sister, "can abate the entertaining powers of the pleasant Horace, which rather improve than decay; though he himself says he is only fit to be a milkwoman, as the *chalk-stones* at his fingers' ends qualify him for nothing but *scoring*; but he declares he will not be a *Bristol milkwoman*. I was obliged to recount to him all that odious tale." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 14.—WRIGHT.

see anybody. I sent for him to town to me; but he will not come till next week. Mrs. Prado has been so excessively humane as to insist on his coming to her house till his sister is buried, which is to be to-night.

The Duchess does not come till the 26th. Poor Miss Bunbury is dead; and Mrs. Boughton, I hear,[1] is in a very bad way. Lord John Russell has sent the Duchess of Bedford word, that he is on the point of marrying Lord Torrington's eldest daughter; and they suppose the wedding is over.[2] Your Ladyship, I am sure, will be pleased to hear that Lord Euston is gone to his father, who has written a letter with the highest approbation of Lady Euston. You will be diverted, too, Madam, to hear that *Hecate* has told Mrs. Keppel, that she was sure that such virtue would be rewarded at last.

2381. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 8, 1786.

I THINK, my dear Sir, that you will be glad to hear that I am getting free from my parenthesis of gout, which, though I treat it as an interlude, has confined me above six weeks, and for a few days was very near being quite serious. It began by my middle finger of this hand, with which I am now writing, discharging a volley of chalk, which brought on gout and inflammation, and both together swelled my arm almost to my shoulder. In short, I was forced to have a surgeon. But last week my finger was delivered of a chalk-stone as big as a large pea, and now I trust the wound will soon heal; and in every other respect I am quite well, and propose taking the air in two or three days, if the weather grows dry: but for two days we have a deluge of rain, and solid fogs after ten days of snow, and a severer frost than any of last winter. I hope you are as well as I am, without having had so grave an *intermezzo*. However, I do not like your inundation of English peerages;[3] and I cannot enough applaud your two nephews for staying, and relieving you of

[1] Lord Lyttelton's ancient 'Delia.' See vol. iii. p. 435.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] Lord John Russell, who, in 1802, succeeded his brother Francis as sixth Duke of Bedford, married, at Brussels, in March 1786, Georgiana Elizabeth, second daughter of Lord Torrington.—WRIGHT.

[3] The Duchess Dowager of Ancaster, Lord and Lady Spencer, Lord and Lady Bulkeley, were then just arrived, or were expected at Florence.—WALPOLE.

so much of the load. I doubt you will have more fatigue, for I hear the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester are going to Rome; and the other princely pair[1] are at Naples: but I hope you will not prefer etiquette to your regimen. I make it a rule, since I must be old and infirm, to plead age and ill-health against anything that is inconvenient. You will see two other English with pleasure, as they will give you no trouble,—Mrs. Damer, and her cousin Miss Campbell, daughter of poor Lady William, whom you knew. The latter has always lived with Mr. Conway and Lady Aylesbury, who are as fond of her as of their own daughter; and indeed she is a very amiable, sensible young woman. In truth, the exports from this country are incredible: France, Nice, Switzerland, swarm with us—and not all, as *you* have lately experienced, raise our credit. Gaming has *transported* half.

I ought to have thanked you sooner for your last, as it announced some kind China from you; but, besides the hindrance of my lame hand, I wished to say I had received it, for indeed I had nothing else to tell you. My confinement and the depopulation of London, which is still a desert, could produce but a very barren letter. I know nothing of the Continent but from our newspapers, the last intelligence in the world to be trusted. They are common-sewers of lies, scandal, abuse, and blunders. What must Europe think of us from our travellers, and from our own accounts of ourselves?—Oh! not much worse than we deserve! The mail from France was robbed last night in Pall-Mall, at half an hour after eight—yes, in the great thoroughfare of London, and within call of the guard at the Palace. The chaise had stopped, the harness was cut, and the portmanteau was taken out of the chaise itself. A courier is gone to Paris for a copy of the despatch. What think you of banditti in the heart of such a capital? yet at Dublin, I believe, the outrages are ten times more enormous. Methinks we are not much more civilised than the ages when the Marches of Wales and Scotland were theatres of rapine.

Miss Molesworth, whom you saw a few years ago with her aunt Lady Lucan, and her cousin Lady Spencer, is just married to Mr. Pratt, Lord Camden's son.

I think this is pretty well written for a hand that has still more chalk-stones on it than joints, and its middle finger wrapped up. In truth, I have suffered very little pain, nor lost an hour's sleep

[1] The Duke and Duchess of Cumberland.—WALPOLE.

but for three nights. Confinement and debility in my limbs are grievances, no doubt, or I should not think the gout so violent an evil as it is reckoned; at least, in the quantity I have undergone in thirty years the total of pain has not been very considerable. It has very seldom lowered my spirits; and, the moment the fever is gone, I can sleep without end, day and night. I am complimented on my patience—but what merit is there in patience, when one is not awake, or not in much pain, and not apt to be out of humour? *You* I have seen patient, and never out of humour, though in torture. In fact, if people of easy fortunes cannot bear illness with temper, what are the poor to do, who have none of our comforts and alleviations? The affluent, I fear, do not consider what a benefit-ticket has fallen to their lot out of millions not so fortunate; yet less do they reflect that chance, not merit, drew the prize out of the wheel.

9th.

I have seen a person from the Custom-house, who tells me 'The Lively' is not expected before February: when it arrives, I will thank you again for the China.

2382. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Friday night, Jan. 27, 1786.

As the first part entertained your Lady-and-Lordships, it is but a sort of duty to send you the second. I received a little Italian note from Mrs. Cosway, this morning, to tell me that, as I had last week met at her house an old acquaintance, without knowing her, I might meet her again this evening, *en connoissance de cause*, as Mademoiselle la Chevalière D'Eon, who, as Mrs. Cosway told me, had taken it ill that I had not reconnoitred her, and said she must be strangely altered—the devil is in it, if she is not!—but, alack! I have found her altered again; adieu to the abbatial dignity that I had fancied I discovered; I now found her loud, noisy, and vulgar; in truth, I believe she had dined a little *en dragon*. The night was hot, she had no muff or gloves, and her hands and arms seem not to have participated of the change of sexes, but are fitter to carry a chair than a fan. I am comforted, too, about her accent. I asked Monsieur Barthelemy, the French Secretary, who was present, whether it was Parisian and good French: he assured me so far from it, that the

first time he met her, he had been surprised at its being so bad, and that her accent is strong Burgundian. You ask me, Madam, why she is here. She says, *pour ses petites affaires;* I take for granted for the same reason that Francis was here two years before he was known.

Nor was this all my entertainment this evening. As Mademoiselle Common of Two's reserve is a little subsided, there were other persons present, as three foreign Ministers besides Barthelemy, Lord Carmarthen, Count Oginski, Wilkes and his daughter, and the chief of the Moravians. I could not help thinking how posterity would wish to have been in my situation, at once with three such historic personages as D'Eon, Wilkes, and Oginski, who had so great a share in the revolution of Poland, and was king of it for four-and-twenty hours. He is a noble figure, very like the Duke of Northumberland in the face, but stouter and better proportioned.

I remember many years ago making the same kind of reflection. I was standing at my window after dinner, in summer, in Arlington-Street, and saw *Patty Blount* (after Pope's death), with nothing remaining of her immortal charms but her *blue eyes*, trudging on foot with her petticoats pinned up, for it rained, to visit *blameless Bethel*, who was sick at the end of the street.

Early in the evening I had been, according to your Ladyship's leave, to wait on Lady Ravensworth. Her cough is very frequent, but it seems entirely from her throat, and not in the least from her breast.

After treating your Ladyship with some of the *dramatis personæ* of modern story, I beg leave to inclose[1] a Venus of the present hour in her "puris *non* naturalibus." The drawing was made by a young lady at Bath, and was given to me by my sister. It diverted me so much that I gave it to Kirgate, with leave to have it engraved for his own benefit, and I should think he would sell hundreds of them.

Miss Hannah More, I see, has advertised her 'Bas Bleus,' which I think you will like. I don't know what her 'Florio' is. Mrs. *Frail* Piozzi's first volume of 'Johnsoniana' is in the press, and will be published in February. There is published another kind of *Ana* called 'Silva,' by a Dr. Heathcote, on which I advise your Ladyship not to throw away five shillings as I did—yet I could not read half-a-crown's worth; it is a heap of dull common-place.

[1] Not inclosed in the MSS.—R. Vernon Smith.

2383. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 9, 1786.

It is very cruel, my dear Madam, when you send me such charming lines,[1] and say such kind and flattering things to me and of me, that I cannot even thank you with my own poor hand; and yet my hand is as much obliged to you as my eye, and ear, and understanding. My hand was in great pain when your present arrived. I opened it directly, and set to reading, till your music and my own vanity composed a quieting draught that glided to the ends of my fingers, and lulled the throbs into the deliquium that attends opium when it does not put one absolutely to sleep. I don't believe that the deity who formerly practised both poetry and physic, when gods got their livelihood by more than one profession, ever gave a recipe in rhyme; and therefore, since Dr. Johnson has prohibited application to pagan divinities, and Mr. Burke has not struck medicine and poetry out of the list of sinecures, I wish you may get a patent for life for exercising both faculties. It would be a comfortable event for me: for, since I cannot wait on you to thank you, nor dare ask you

> to call your doves yourself,

and visit me in your Parnassian quality, I might send for you as my *physicianess*. Yet why should not I ask you to come and see me? You are not such a prude as to

> blush to show compassion,

though it should

> not chance this year to be the fashion.[2]

And I can tell you, that powerful as your poetry is, and old as I am, I believe a visit from you would do me as much good almost as your verses.[3] In the mean time, I beg you to accept of an

[1] The poem of 'Florio,' dedicated to Mr. Walpole.—Berry.

[2] *Vide* 'Florio.'—Berry.

[3] On the 11th, Hannah More paid him a visit. "I made poor Vesey," she says, "go with me on Saturday to see Mr. Walpole, who has had a long illness. Notwithstanding his sufferings, I never found him so pleasant, so witty, and so entertaining. He said a thousand diverting things about 'Florio;' but accused me of having

addition to your Strawberry editions; and believe me to be, with the greatest gratitude, your too much honoured and most obliged humble servant.

2384. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Friday night, Feb. 10, 1786.

As your Ladyship announced your speedy arrival in town; and as I suppose few read the second edition of a book after reading the first, I forbore to send you a second edition of my gout; yet I have had a black-letter one. My healed finger opened again, and for this week my surgeon has been picking chalk-stones out of both hands as if he were shelling peas. The gout returned, too, into my right hand and elbow, and swelled both. In short, since Wednesday was s'ennight, I have been prisoner a second time, and when my durance will end, I do not guess.

When you do come, Madam, you will not hear much of Mr. Eden or Mrs. Jordan, or of the 'Heiress,' which, by the way, I went through twice in one day, and liked better than any comedy I have seen since the 'Provoked Husband;' I like the prologue, too, very much; the epilogue is unworthy of both. Oh! but the hubbub you are to hear, and to talk of, and except which, you are to hear and talk of nothing else, for they tell me the passengers in the streets, of all ranks, talk of it, is a subject to which I suppose your letters have already attuned you, and on which I alone, for certain reasons, will say nothing; but if you don't guess, Madam, I will give you a clue: don't you remember that, after Louis Quatorze had married the Maintenon, and the Dauphin Mademoiselle Chouin, the Duchess of Burgundy said to her husband, "*Si je venois à mourir, feriez vous le troisième tome de votre famille?*"—You may swear that my mysterious silence is not dated from any privity or knowledge: I do not know a tittle from any good authority; and though a mass of circumstances are cited and put together, they command no credit: whoever believes, must believe upon trust.

imposed on the world by a dedication full of falsehood; meaning the compliment to himself. I never knew a man suffer pain with such entire patience. This submission is certainly a most valuable part of religion; and yet, alas! he is not religious. I must, however, do him the justice to say, that, except the delight he has in teazing me for what he calls over-strictness, I never heard a sentence from him which savoured of infidelity." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 11.—Wright.

The rest must be the work—or the explosion of time, though secrecy does not seem to be the measure most affected.

To divert the theme, how do you like, Madam, the following story? A young Madame de Choiseul is inloved with by Monsieur de Coigny and Prince Joseph of Monaco. She longed for a parrot that should be a miracle of eloquence: every other shop in Paris sells mackaws, parrots, cockatoos, &c. No wonder one at least of the rivals soon found a Mr. Pitt, and the bird was immediately declared the nymph's first minister: but as she had two passions as well as two lovers, she was also enamoured of General Jackoo at Astley's. The unsuccessful candidate offered Astley ingots for his monkey, but Astley demanding a *terre* for life, the paladin was forced to desist, but fortunately heard of another miracle of parts of the Monomotapan race, who was not in so exalted a sphere of life, being only a *marmiton* in a kitchen, where he had learnt to pluck fowls with inimitable dexterity. This dear animal was not invaluable, was bought, and presented to Madame de Choiseul, who immediately made him the *secretaire de ses commandemens*. Her caresses were distributed equally to the animals, and her thanks to the donors. The first time she went out, the two former were locked up in her bed-chamber: how the two latter were disposed of, history is silent. Ah! I dread to tell the sequel. When the lady returned and flew to her chamber, Jackoo the second received her with all the *empressement possible*—but where was Poll?—found at last under the bed, shivering and cowering—and without a feather, as stark as any Christian. Poll's presenter concluded that his rival had given the monkey with that very view, challenged him, they fought, and both were wounded; and an heroic adventure it was!

I have not paper or breath to add more, Madam, but to thank you for inverting the story of Poll, and feathering my Venus. I hope I shall have occasion to send you no more letters; but that if I cannot wait on you, you will have charity enough to come and visit the chalk-pits in Berkeley Square.

2385. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 18, 1786.

If I was to talk of what has occupied most of my thoughts for these last three months, it would be of myself; but that is not a subject with which I ought to harass others, and therefore I shall be

brief on it. A finger of each hand has been pouring out a hail of chalk-stones and liquid chalk; and the first finger, which I hoped exhausted, last week opened again and threw out a cascade of the latter, exactly with the effort of a pipe that bursts in the streets: the gout followed, and has swelled both hand and arm; and this codicil will cost me at least three weeks. I must persuade myself, if I can, that these explosions will give me some repose; but there are too many chalk-eggs in the other fingers not to be hatched in succession.

I have had no occasion at least, my dear Sir, to double my lamentation on your account. Mrs. Damer and Miss Campbell have sent Lady Aylesbury the most pleasing accounts of your health, and the warmest encomiums on you and your nephew's kindness to them. I must thrust myself into a share of the gratitude; for, with all their merit and your benevolence, I do not believe you forgot the pleasure you was giving me.

There are reports that the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester are going to Rome, but we do not know it certainly. Our newspapers have been pleased twice lately to kill his Royal Highness; but, though they murder characters and reputations, they cannot take away lives; and indeed they themselves are so lost to all credit, that even the first notification made no impression.

Though the Parliament has been some time opened, it does not furnish a paragraph. There have been three or four times some angry speeches, but no long debate or division. The Opposition seems very inactive, but promises some vivacity on Indian affairs. Mr. Eden's desertion has been the chief topic of politics, and on his subject the newspapers have been so profuse that I can make no additions to them.

Since I began this, I have received yours of the 28th past; and, though your account of yourself is exceedingly welcome and pleasing, I am much grieved that your excellent nephews are leaving you: I am sure they cannot help it, for they have shown how much they prefer attending and saving you trouble. For trouble, I hope you will totally dispense with it: your age, indisposition, and fifty years of exertion of duties, benevolence, and attentions to all the world, demand and claim a *quietus;* and, if I have any weight with you, I enjoin your taking it out. If their RR. HH. of Gloucester pass through Florence, I do hope and beg that with all your public and private zeal you will not exert a strength you have not in doing honours; they, I am sure, will not expect it from you: and, when one's own health is at stake, dignities are a joke. When I am ill, I

look on Royalties as I do when I see them on the stage, as pageants void of reality: what signifies whether they are composed of velvet and ermine, or of buckram and tinsel? If death opens one's eyes to the emptiness of glories here, sickness surely ought at least to open one eye. Your sweet nature does not think so roughly as mine, and therefore I prescribe stronger doses to you, which I hope self-preservation will persuade you to follow. Mr. Dutens[1] was here yesterday, and talked to me for an hour on all your good qualities; and charmed me by describing how the people of Florence, as you pass along the streets, show you to one another with fondness and respect.

I am obliged to you for your accounts of the House of *Albany;*[2] but that extinguishing family can make no sensation here when we have other guess-matter[3] to talk of in a higher and more flourishing race: and yet were rumour—ay, much more than rumour, every voice in England—to be credited, the matter, somehow or other, reaches even from London to Rome. I know nothing but the buzz of the day, nor can say more upon it: if I send you a riddle, fame, or echo from so many voices, will soon reach you and explain the enigma; though I hope it is essentially void of truth, and that appearances rise from a much more common cause.

The swelling of my hand is much abated since I began to dictate this yesterday. The day has been so vernal, that my surgeon would have persuaded me to take the air; but I am such a coward about relapses, that I would not venture. Adieu!

2386. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Berkeley Square, March 16, 1786.

Your short letter on losing your two amiable nephews gave me great pain for you, my dear Sir. As Sir Horace generally hires *post-winds*, I expected him the next day: but, as the snow had engaged the whole stable of east-winds for this last month, he is not arrived yet, nor Ginori's China neither, which ought to have been

[1] A French Protestant clergyman, who had been employed in the embassy at Turin under Mr. Mackenzie and Lord Mountstuart, and author of several works.—Walpole.

[2] The Pretender's family.—Walpole.—Mann's official accounts home of the doings of the House of Albany have been collected by the present Lord Stanhope, and printed by the Roxburgh Society.—Cunningham.

[3] The connection of the Prince of Wales with Mrs. Fitzherbert.—Walpole.

here in February; and which disappointment contributed to delay my thanks, though I can say already that

Tuis nunc Omnia plena
Muneribus.

Two additional causes have concurred in my silence: I had nothing new to tell you; and, till within these ten days, my poor lame and cold hands could not move a pen. Our second winter has been bitter; and, though my chalk-mines were exhausted for the present, I did not dare to stir out, nor have yet been abroad in a morning but three times;—and yesterday we had a new codicil of snow. Our great roads, spacious and level as they are, are almost impassable.

London has been very calm, both politically and fashionably. Mr. Pitt lost a Question, by the Speaker's vote only, on a large plan of fortifications which the Minister had adopted to please the Duke of Richmond. Most other debates roll on the affair of Mr. Hastings, who is black-washed by the Opposition, and is to be white-washed by the House of Commons. I do not know who is guilty or innocent; but I have no doubt but India has been blood-washed by our countrymen!

The present subject of the day comes from a country where there reigns as little equity, and more avowed barbarism, than in India! The hero is a Mr. Fitzgerald, grandson of Lord Hervey, and consequently nephew of his Eminence *the Episcopal Earl of Bristol*—nor is the nepotism unworthy of the uncle. England, as well as Ireland, has long rung with Fitzgerald's exploits, who has just committed murders that would be almost unparalleled, if a few years ago he had not attempted the life of his own father, who was defended by another son—and yet neither father nor brother were much better than the assassin. The particulars of the present tragedy are too long for a letter, and unnecessary, as they are all in the newspapers. By this time Fitzgerald is hanged, or *rescued*, or dead of his wounds; for the friends of the murdered broke into the prison, and gave Fitzgerald many wounds, but did not despatch him, as he has long worn a waistcoat lined with elastic gum, which had *very honourably* saved his life formerly, when shot in a duel. This savage story is a little relieved by Cagliostro's Memorial, and by the exhibition of Mademoiselle la Chevalière D'Eon, who is come over. I trouble myself little to inquire into either of their histories—one shall never know the real truth of either; and what avails it to scrutinise what is un-

fathomable? What signifies exploring, when at last one's curiosity may rest on error.

I have a pleasanter theme for my own satisfaction: Captain Hugh Conway, a younger son of Lord Hertford, is going to marry Lady Horatia Waldegrave.[1] He is one of the first marine characters, and has every quality that would adorn any profession; but the striking resemblance between the lovers are good-nature and beauty. Lord Hertford is as much charmed with the match as I am; and we flatter ourselves the Duchess, to whom a courier is gone, and for whose consent they wait, will approve of it too, though it will not be an opulent alliance. Their RR. HH. are at Milan.

Lord and Lady Spencer are arrived—and now I suppose the adventures of a certain Lady[2] and *her Cousin Vernon*, which I have kept profoundly secret, will be public. I have lately received a letter from *the Lady* from *Petersburg:* luckily, she gave me no direction to her, no more than from *Venice;* so, if necessary, I shall plead that I did not know whether I must direct next to Grand Cairo, or Constantinople. Petersburg I think a very congenial asylum; the Sovereign has already fostered the *Ducal Countess of Bristol*—for in the family of Hervey double dignities couple with facility. Formerly our outlaws used to concentre at Boulogne; they are now spread over the face of the earth. *Mr. Vernon's Cousin* tells me she has been also at Warsaw; that she showed the King a letter of mine, who put it into his pocket, translated it into French (though returning the original), and would send it to his sister the Princess Czartoriski at Vienna:—so, I may see it in an Utrecht Gazette! I know not what it contained; however, I comfort myself that I have never dealt with my heroine but in compliments or good advice: but this comes of corresponding with strolling Roxanas.

I have very lately been lent a volume of poems, composed and printed at Florence, in which another of our ex-heroines, Mrs. Piozzi,[3] has a considerable share: her associates, three of the English bards who assisted in the little garland which Ramsay the painter sent me. The present is a plump octavo; and, if you have not sent me a copy by your nephew, I should be glad if you could get one for

[1] Third daughter of the Duchess of Gloucester by her first husband, James, Earl of Waldegrave. Lady Horatia and Captain Conway were second-cousins once removed. —WALPOLE.

[2] Elizabeth Berkeley, Lady Craven, sister of the Earl of Berkeley.—WALPOLE.

[3] Widow of Mr. Thrale, a great brewer, remarried to Piozzi, an Italian fiddler. She had broken with Sir Horace, because he could not invite her husband with the Italian nobility.—WALPOLE.

me: not for the merit of the verses, which are moderate enough, and faint imitations of our good poets; but for a short and sensible and genteel preface by La Piozzi, from whom I have just seen a very clever letter to Mrs. Montagu, to disavow a jackanapes who has lately made a noise here, one Boswell, by anecdotes of Dr. Johnson. In a day or two we expect another collection by the same Signora.

Though I ask for that volume, it made me very indignant. Though that constellation of *ignes fatui* have flattered one another as if they were real stars, I turned over the whole set of verses, (though I did not read a quarter,) and could not find the only name I expected to see—yours. What stocks and stones!—more insensible than their predecessors, who danced to Orpheus!—who lived under the shade of your virtues, and could drink of the stream of your humanity, benevolence, and attentions, and not attempt to pay one line to gratitude. If you send me the book, I think I will burn all but the preface.

I hope the spring will recruit your spirits, though it cannot replace your nephews! I am very impatient for their arrival. My own gout is gone, the chalk suspended for the present, and except being six months older than Methusalem in point of strength, I am as well as I ever am.

17*th.*

Your nephews are arrived; I have seen Sir Horace, he will write to you to-night himself. Adieu!

2387. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Berkeley Square, March 28, 1786.

This is but a codicil to my letter of last week, and only to tell you that 'The Lively' is arrived, and that I have received the vases and books; and, by the courier, your letter of the 10th. The form of the vases is handsome; the porcelain and the gilding inferior to ours, and both to those of France; as the *paste* of ours at Bristol, Worcester, and Derby is superior to all but that of Saxony. The French excel us all in ornaments of taste—I mean, in such ornaments as do not rise to serious magnificence; but they must keep within doors: they may deck dress, furniture, china, and snuff-boxes; but buildings, cities, gardens, will not allow of spangles.

You have not told me whether the vases are of Ginori's or the

Great-Duke's manufacture; I imagine, of the former: but I shall ask your nephew when he returns to London. I thank you, too, for the volume of poems by the *Quadruple Alliance*, which, in my last, I have begged you to send me; a wish you had anticipated. In the case there were also four copies of the Panegyric on Captain Cook, —did you mean any of the copies for any particular persons?— and the poem on Lord Robert Manners. Once more, thanks for all!

Two days ago appeared Madame Piozzi's 'Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson.' I am lamentably disappointed—in her, I mean; not in him. I had conceived a favourable opinion of her capacity. But this new book is wretched; a high-varnished preface to a heap of rubbish, in a very vulgar style, and too void of method even for such a farrago. Her panegyric is loud in praise of her hero; and almost every fact she relates disgraces him. She allows and proves he was arrogant, yet affirms he was not proud; as if arrogance were not the flower of pride. A man may be proud, and may conceal it; if he is arrogant, he declares he is proud. She, and all Johnson's disciples, seem to have taken his brutal contradictions for *bons-mots*. Some of his own works show that he had, at times, strong, excellent sense; and that he had the virtue of charity to a high degree, is indubitable: but his friends (of whom he made a woful choice) have taken care to let the world know, that in behaviour he was an ill-natured bear, and in opinions as senseless a bigot as an old washerwoman—a brave composition for a philosopher! Let me turn from such a Hottentot to his reverse—to *you;* to you, the mild, benevolent, beneficent friend of mankind, and the true contented philosopher in every stage. Your last resigned letter is an antidote to all Johnson's coarse, meditated, offensive apophthegms.

As spring must be arrived in Italy, though postponed again here by snow, frosts, and east-winds, I trust your cough will be softened, if not removed. I scarce can bring myself to hope it quite cured. My long observation has persuaded me, that a cough, though a vexatious remedy, is a preservative of elderly persons, from exercising and clearing the breast and lungs. I know two or three, who for years have had a constant cough in winter, and who have dangerous illnesses if it does not return in its season.

Thank you for 'The Leyden Gazette;' the theme[1] is still very rife, but with no new event, though contradictory reports are coined

[1] Connection of the Prince of Wales and Mrs. Fitzherbert.—WALPOLE.

every day. I do not repeat them, for I know not which are true, nor whether any are

I interest myself much more in the slight shown to your nephew: it surprised me, for I thought that *he* at least was acceptable. Your nephew's delicacy was silent to me; and so must I be by the post.

I have at last been paid my fortune by *my* nephew—just forty years after my father's death! The only surviving son of that *Grand Corrupter*, who plundered England, has, after forty years, received four thousand pounds; which, with three thousand more, is all I have *ever* had from my father's family!—yet calumny will not blush, but repeat the lie! My nephew, or Lucas, have acted like themselves, and have jockied me out of six hundred pounds by a *finesse* in the bond, by dating it three years later than it should have been, and which my negligence had overlooked; and, therefore, I may blame myself. Lucas, who extorted from Mozzi interest upon interest against my opinion, took care not to offer it to me, though the case is similar, except that mine would have been much less; and you may be sure I would not ask for what I would not have accepted, as I disapprove such extortion, and should be sorry to resemble them. The purport, too, of the bond was curious. Lucas did not know that my eldest brother had paid me one thousand pounds of my fortune, and drew the bond for five thousand. I would not accept it, but made him draw it for four thousand. I will do him the justice to acknowledge that he said, "Oh, my Lord would pay me the whole." I replied, "I would *not* be paid twice; I knew, if *they* did not, that I had received one thousand:" and so, because I would not accept of what was not due to me, they curtailed the interest that ought to be my due! Well! I have done with them, and so shall you of hearing of them.

29th.

I have effaced two lines that I had written, because upon recollection I can account better for what happened. There is a gentlewoman[1] in the world who, a very few years ago, tried to captivate your nephew. She has had better success, I believe, lately, in another place, though less to her honour. I ascribe to her the coldness; and dare to say, that a third person[2] did not know anything of the matter. I imagine you will have this mystery explained, like another.

[1] Lady Almeria Carpenter, lady of the bedchamber to the Duchess of Gloucester, and mistress of the Duke.—WALPOLE.

[2] The Duchess, who did not know of Sir H. Mann, jun., being at Genoa, where the Duke would not see him.—WALPOLE.

Signora Piozzi's book is not likely to gratify her expectation of renown. There is a Dr. Wolcot,[1] a burlesque hard, who had ridiculed highly, and most deservedly, another of Johnson's biographic zanies, one Boswell; he has already advertised an 'Eclogue between Bozzi and Piozzi,' to be published next week; and, indeed, there is ample matter. The Signora talks of her Doctor's *expanded* mind, and has contributed her mite to show that never mind was narrower. In fact, the poor man is to be pitied: he was mad, and his disciples did not find it out, but have unveiled all his defects; nay, have exhibited all his brutalities as wit, and his lowest conundrums as humour. Judge!—The Piozzi relates, that a young man asking him where Palmyra was, he replied, "In Ireland; it was a bog planted with palm-trees!" I am now rejoiced, and do not wonder that you was not thought worthy to be mentioned by such a panegyrist! But what will posterity think of us when it reads what an idol we adored?

2388. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Berkeley Square, April 30, 1786.

The almanac tells me that I ought to write to you; but then it ought to tell me what to say. I know nothing: people have been out of town for Easter, or rather for Newmarket; for our diversions mark the seasons, instead of their proclaiming themselves. We have no more spring than we had last year. I believe the milk-maids to-morrow will be forced to dress their garlands with Christmas nosegays of holly and ivy, for want of flowers.

The tragedy, or rather, I suppose, the farce, of Mr. Hastings's Trial is also to commence to-morrow, when he is to make his defence before the House of Commons; where the majority of his judges are *ready* to be astonished at his eloquence, and the transparency of his innocence, and the lustre of his merit. In the mean time, the charges are enormous, and make numbers, who are not to be his jury, marvel how he will clear himself of half; and, if he does, what he will do with the remainder. I have not yet looked into the charge, which fills a thick octavo. My opinion is formed more summarily: innocence does not pave its way with diamonds, nor has a quarry of them on its estate.

[1] The well-known satirist, who wrote under the name of *Peter Pindar*.—Wright.

All conversation turns on a trio of culprits—Hastings, Fitzgerald, and the Cardinal of Rohan. I have heard so much of all lately, that I confound them, and am not sure whether it was not the first who pretended to buy a brilliant necklace for the *Queen*, or who committed murders in Ireland, not in India; or whether it was not Fitzgerald who did not deal with Cagliostro for the secret of raising the dead, as he may have occasion for it soon. So much for tragedy! Our comic performers are Boswell and Dame Piozzi.[1] The cock-biographer has fixed a direct lie on the hen, by an advertisement in which he affirms that he communicated his manuscript to Madame Thrale, and that she made no objection to what he says of her low opinion of Mrs. Montagu's book [on Shakespeare]. It is very possible that it might not be her real opinion, but was uttered in compliment to Johnson, or for fear he should spit in her face if she disagreed with him; but how will she get over her not objecting to the passage remaining? She must have known, by knowing Boswell, and by having a similar intention herself, that his Anecdotes would certainly be published; —in short, the ridiculous woman will be strangely disappointed. As she must have heard that the whole first impression of her book was sold the first day, no doubt she expects, on her landing, to be received like the Governor of Gibraltar, and to find the road strewed with branches of palm. She, and Boswell, and their Hero, are the joke of the public. A Dr. Wolcot, *soi-disant* Peter Pindar, has published a burlesque eclogue, in which Boswell and the Signora are the interlocutors, and all the absurdest passages in the works of both are ridiculed. The print-shops teem with satiric prints on them: one, in which Boswell, as a monkey, is riding on Johnson, the bear, has this witty inscription, "My Friend *delineavit*." —But enough of these mountebanks!

The Duchess of Gloucester tells me that Lord Cowper is at Milan, on his way to England; yet, I shall not wonder if he still turns back. I remember Lady Orford came even to Calais, and returned *sur ses pas*.

May 4th.

I must send my letter to the office to-night, for I go to Strawberry

[1] On this subject, Mrs. Hannah More thus writes to her sister, April 1786:—"The Bozzi, &c., subjects are not exhausted, though everybody seems heartily sick of them. Everybody, however, conspires not to let them drop. That the 'Cagliostro,' and the 'Cardinal's necklace,' spoil all conversation, and destroyed a very good evening at Mr. Pepys's last night. The party was snug, and of my own bespeaking; consisting only of Mr. Walpole, Mrs. Montagu, the Burneys, and Cambridge." *Memoirs of Mrs. Hannah More*, vol. ii. p. 16.—WRIGHT.

to-morrow for two or three days—not that we have spring or summer yet. I believe both Seasons have perceived that nobody goes out of town till July, and that therefore it is not worth while to come over so early as they used to do. The Sun might save himself the same trouble, and has no occasion to rise before ten at night; for all Nature ought, no doubt, to take the *ton* from people of fashion, unless Nature is willing to indulge them in the opportunity of contradicting her! Indeed, at present, our fine ladies seem to copy her—at least, the ancient symbols of her; for, though they do not exhibit a profusion of naked bubbies down to their shoe-buckles, yet they protrude a prominence of gauze that would cover all the dugs of Alma Mater. Don't, however, imagine that I am disposed to be a censor of modes, as most old folks are, who seem to think that they came into the world at the critical moment when everything was in perfection, and ought to suffer no farther innovation. On the contrary, I always maintain that the ordinances of the young are right. Who ought to invent fashions? Surely not the ancient. I tell my veteran contemporaries that, if they will have patience for three months, the reigning evil, whatever it is, will be cured; whereas, if they fret till things are just as they should be, they may vex themselves to the day of doom. I carry this way of thinking still farther, and extend it to almost all reformations. Could one cure the world of being foolish, it were something; but to cure it of any one folly is only making room for some other, which, one is sure, will succeed to the vacant place.

Mr. Hastings used two days in his defence, which was not thought a very modest one, and rested rather on Machiavel's code than on that of rigid moralists. The House is now hearing evidence; and as his counsel, Mr. Machiavel, will not challenge many of the jury, I suppose Mr. Hastings will be honourably acquitted. In fact, who but Machiavel can pretend that we have a shadow of title to a foot of land in India; unless, as our Law deems that what is done extra-parochially is deemed to have happened in the parish of St. Martin's in the Fields, India must in course belong to the Crown of Great Britain. Alexander distrained the goods and chattels of Popes upon a similar plea; and the Popes thought all the world belonged to them, as heirs-at-law to one who had not an acre upon earth. We condemned and attainted the Popes without trial, which was not in fashion in the reign of Henry the Eighth, and, by the law of forfeiture, confiscated all their injustice to our own use; and thus, till we shall be ejected, have we a right to exercise all the tyranny

and rapine that ever was practised by any of our predecessors anywhere,—as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

2389. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Berkeley Square, May 29, 1786.

I HAVE been very unhappy at your debility, that expressed itself in your last letter—I do not say, that you complained of; for a murmur cannot possibly escape from one who never feels impatience, and whose temper infuses that philosophy which even your good sense could not alone confer. I was made easier last night by Lord Cowper, who had just received a very comfortable letter from you; and, now that my alarm is dissipated, my reason can recover its tone, and tells me that weakness is not danger—and might not my own experience have told me so? A puff of wind could blow me away; and yet here I am still, and have stood many a rough blast. I depend on the sun of Florence, and on the cool pure air of its nights, for rehabilitating your nerves; and I am impatient for Mrs. Damer's return from Rome, because I flatter myself that she will send a good account of your convalescence.

Well! you find I have seen your principied Earl.[1] Curiosity carried me to a great concert at Mrs. Cosway's t'other night—not to hear Rubinelli, who sung *one* song at the extravagant price of ten guineas, and whom for as many shillings I have heard sing half-a-dozen at the Opera House; no, but I was curious to see an English Earl who had passed thirty years at Florence, and is more proud of a pinchbeck Principality and a paltry order from Wirtemberg, than he was of being a Peer of Great Britain, when Great Britain *was* something. Had I stayed till it is *not*, I would have remained where I was. I merely meant to amuse my eyes; but Mr. Dutens brought the personage to me, and presented us to each other. He answered very well to my idea, for I should have taken his Highness for a Doge of Genoa: he has the awkward dignity of a temporary representative of nominal power. Peace be with him and his leaf-gold!

I believe that, after having told you that I plead my age and relics of gout to dispense with doing what I don't like, you will

[1] Earl Cowper.—WALPOLE.

conclude I am grown in my dotage as fond of Highnesses as Earl Cowper or Lady Mary Coke. Most certainly it was not the plan of any part of my life to end my career with Princes and Princesses, though I began with them, and was carried to Leicester House in my childhood to play with the late Duke of Cumberland and Princess Mary. Fate has again in my latter days thrown me amongst royalties; and (what is not common), though I have quitted the world, I seem to have *retired into drawing-rooms*. Ever since the late King's death, I have made Princess Amelie's parties once or twice a-week: then, *bien malgré moi*, I was plunged into Gloucester House: and now by Princess Amelie I have been presented to the Prince of Wales at her house; and by my niece Lady Horatia's marriage with Captain Conway, who is a principal favourite of His Royal Highness, I have dined with the Prince at Lord Hertford's, and since at his own palace, where he was pleased to give a dinner to the two families, who in fact were one family[1] before.

This parenthesis being passed, I am going to my quiet little Hill, after having been in public to-day more than I purposed ever to be again. I attended Princess Amelie to the rehearsal of Handel's Jubilee in Westminster Abbey, which I had been far from meditating; but, as she had the Bishop of Rochester's gallery, it was quite easy, and I had no crowd to limp through. The sight was really very fine, and the performance magnificent; but the chorus and kettle-drums for four hours were so thunderful, that they gave me the head-ache, to which I am not at all subject. Rubinelli's voice sounded divinely sweet, and more distinctly than at the Opera. The Mara's not so well, nor is she so much the fashion. I have been but once at the Opera, and twice at the play, this year. When the gout confines me to my room, it is a grievance: I do not complain of it for curtailing my diversions, for which I have no more taste than for courts; nor shall death surprise me in a theatre or in a drawing-room.

There has been no event of any consequence. I expect every day to hear of the marriage of your nephew and niece; and then I conclude the father will make you another visit, as he told me he should as soon as he has settled his daughter. I love to have him with you; not only for your comfort, but to save you the trouble of

[1] Captain Conway's grandmother and Lady Horatia's grandmother were sisters. — WALPOLE.

doing honours, which I dread for you since our Peeresses have taken to travelling as much as their eldest sons.

I was pleased to-day by reflecting, that though there were sixteen hundred persons present, who went in and out as they pleased, the extremest order and decency were observed, and not a guard was to be seen! Duchesses were mixed with the crowd, and not a bayonet was necessary—what a satire on Governments, that sow them thick where fifty persons are assembled! How dares a short-lived mortal tell his own fellow-creatures that he is afraid to leave them at liberty at their own diversions?

2390. TO THE EARL OF BUCHAN.[1]

My Lord: *Strawberry Hill, June* 17, 1786.

I have received the honour of your Lordship's two letters, and have seen Mr. [John] Brown, who has dined here, and is to come again. He seems to have a great deal of intelligence, taste, and information. Mr. Fraser I am sorry I cannot serve. It is above ten years since I was in France; I have kept up no correspondence there at all, and have lost my particular friends. With very few of the *literati* had I any acquaintance and far fewer much esteem. The Duc de Nivernois has been very kind to me, and I have great respect for him; but, as he lives very retired, I could not take the liberty of recommending to him a young man with whom I am not even acquainted myself.

The only Scottish Portraits I have, or of persons connected with your Lordship's plan, are the following, and of almost all but seven or eight, prints are very common:—

James V. and Mary of Guise, his second Queen. Copies.
Mary Queen of Scots. Copy.
James I., Charles I., Charles II., James II
Lady Arabella Stuart.
Mary, Princess of Orange, daughter of Charles I. Copy.
Henrietta, Duchess of Orleans.
Second Duke of Lenox and Frances Howard, his Duchess.
Queen of Bohemia.
Ker, Earl of Somerset, elderly.

[1] Now first published. Original in British Museum: *Addit. MSS.*—Cunningham.

His Countess when young, copy; when old, original, but faded.
Duke of Lauderdale. Copy.
Chancellor Loudon.
Bishop Burnet.
Lord Mansfield, young.
John Law.

I have not Mr. Clark's views, my Lord, and am much obliged to your Lordship for the offer of them, but would not put you to any trouble of procuring them. I am so old and infirm, that it would be idle in me to think of increasing my collection. I have no pursuits left, nor activity enough to meddle either with virtù or letters.

When I see Mr. Pinkerton, I do not know when it will be, I will acquaint him with your Lordship's obliging notice, and have the honour to be, with great respect,

My Lord, &c.,
HOR. WALPOLE.

2391. TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Sunday night, June 18, 1786.

I SUPPOSE you have been swearing at the east wind for parching your verdure, and are now weeping for the rain that drowns your hay. I have these calamities in common, and my constant and particular one,—people that come to see my house, which unfortunately is more in request than ever. Already I have had twenty-eight sets, have five more tickets given out; and yesterday, before I had dined, three German barons came. My house is a torment, not a comfort!

I was sent for again to dine at Gunnersbury on Friday, and was forced to send to town for a dress-coat and a sword. There were the Prince of Wales, the Prince of Mecklenburg, the Duke of Portland, Lord Clanbrassil, Lord and Lady Clermont, Lord and Lady Southampton, Lord Pelham, and Mrs. Howe. The Prince of Mecklenburg went back to Windsor after coffee; and the Prince and Lord and Lady Clermont to town after tea, to hear some new French players at Lady William Gordon's. The Princess, Lady Barrymore, and the rest of us, played three pools at commerce till ten. I am afraid I was tired and gaped. While we were at the dairy, the Princess insisted on my making some verses on Gunnersbury. I pleaded being superannuated. She would not excuse me. I promised she

should have an Ode on her next Birthday, which diverted the Prince; but all would not do. So, as I came home, I made the following stanzas, and sent them to her breakfast next morning:

In deathless odes for ever green
Augustus' laurels blow;
Nor e'er was grateful duty seen
In warmer strains to flow.

Oh! why is Flaccus not alive,
Your favourite scene to sing?
To Gunnersbury's charms could give
His lyre immortal spring.

As warm as his my zeal for you,
Great princess! could I show it:
But though you have a Horace too—
Ah, Madam! he's no poet.

If they are but poor verses, consider I am sixty-nine, was half asleep, and made them almost extempore—and by command! However, they succeeded, and I received this gracious answer:—

"I wish I had a name that could answer your pretty verses. Your yawning yesterday opened your vein for pleasing me; and I return you my thanks, my good Mr. Walpole, and remain sincerely your friend,

"AMELIA."

I think this is very genteel at seventy-five.

Do you know that I have bought the Jupiter Serapis as well as the Julio Clovio![1] Mr. * * * assures me he has seen six of the head, and not one of them so fine, or so well preserved. I am glad Sir Joshua Reynolds saw no more excellence in the Jupiter than in the Clovio; or the Duke of Portland, I suppose, would have purchased it, as he has the Vase for a thousand pounds. I would not change. I told Sir William Hamilton and the late Duchess, when I never thought it would be mine, that I had rather have the head than the Vase. I shall long for Mrs. Damer to make a bust to it, and then it will be still more valuable. I have deposited both the Illumination and the Jupiter in Lady Di.'s cabinet, which is worthy of them. And here my collection winds up; I will not purchase trumpery after such jewels. Besides, everything is much dearer in old age, as one has less time to enjoy. Good night!

[1] At the sale of the Duchess-dowager of Portland. For the Jupiter Serapis Walpole gave 165 guineas—and for the Julio Clovio now (1858) in the possession of Frances, Lady Waldegrave, he gave 168*l*.—CUNNINGHAM.

2392. TO RICHARD GOUGH, ESQ.

Berkeley Square, June 21, 1786.

On coming to town, yesterday, upon business, I found, Sir, your very magnificent and most valuable present,[1] for which I beg you will accept my most grateful thanks. I am impatient to return to Twickenham to read it tranquilly. As yet I have only had time to turn the prints over, and to read the preface; but I see already that it is both a noble and laborious work, and will do great honour both to you and to your country. Yet one apprehension it has given me —I fear not living to see the second part! Yet I shall presume to keep it unbound; not only till it is perfectly dry and secure, but, as I mean the binding should be as fine as it deserves, I should be afraid of not having both volumes exactly alike.

Your partiality, I doubt, Sir, has induced you to insert a paper not so worthy of the public regard as the rest of your splendid performance. My letter to Mr. Cole,[2] which I am sure I had utterly forgotten to have ever written, was a hasty indigested sketch, like the rest of my scribblings, and never calculated to lead such well-meditated and accurate works as yours. Having lived familiarly with Mr. Cole from our boyhood, I used to write to him carelessly on the occasions that occurred. As it was always on subjects of no importance, I never thought of enjoining secrecy. I could not foresee that such idle communications would find a place in a great national work, or I should have been more attentive to what I said. Your taste, Sir, I fear, has for once been misled: and I shall be sorry for having innocently blemished a single page.

Since your partiality (for such it certainly was) has gone so far, I flatter myself you will have retained enough to accept, not a retribution, but a trifling mark of my regard, in the little volume that accompanies this; in which you will find that another too favourable reader[3] has bestowed on me more distinction than I could procure for myself, by turning my slight 'Essay on Gardening' into the pure French of the last age; and, which is wonderful, has not debased Milton by

[1] The first volume of Mr. Gough's 'Sepulchral Monuments in Great Britain.'—Wright.

[2] See vol. v. p. 245.—Wright.

[3] The Duc de Nivernois.—Cunningham.

French poetry: on the contrary, I think Milton has given a dignity to French poetry—nay, and harmony! both which I thought that language almost incapable of receiving. As I would wish to give all the value I can to my offering, I will mention, that I have printed but four hundred copies, half of which went to France; and as this is an age in which mere rarities are preferred to commoner things of intrinsic worth,—as I have found by the ridiculous prices given for some of my insignificant publications, merely because they are scarce, —I hope, under the title of a kind of curiosity, my thin piece will be admitted into your library.

If you would indulge me so far, Sir, as to let me know when I might hope to see the second part, I would calculate how many more fits of the gout I may weather, and would be still more strict in my regimen. I hope, at least, that you will not wait for the engravers, but will accomplish the text for the sake of the world: in this I speak disinterestedly. Though you are much younger than I am, I would have your part of the work secure: engravers may always proceed, or be found; another author cannot.

2393. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

June 22, 1786

I HAVE not yet received your letter by Mrs. Damer, my dear Sir; but I have that of June 3rd, which announces it. I lament the trouble your cough gives you, though I am quite persuaded that it is medicinal, and diverts the gout from critical parts. I have felt so much, and consequently have observed so much, of chronical disorders, that I don't think I deceive myself. Should you tell me your complaint is not gouty, I should reply, that all chronical distempers are or ought to be gout; and, when they do not appear in their proper form, are only deviations. Coughs in old persons clear the lungs; and, as I have told you, I know two elderly persons who are never so well as when they have a cough.

I love Mrs. Damer for her attention to you; but I shall scold her, instead of you, for letting you send me the Cameo. To you I will not say a cross word, when you are weak; but why will you not let me love you without being obliged to it by gratitude? You make me appear in my own eyes interested; a dirty quality, of which I flattered myself I was totally free. Gratitude may be a virtue; but what is a man who consents to have fifty obligations to be so virtuous? I have always professed hating presents: must not I appear a hypocrite, when I have accepted so many from you?

Well! as I have registered them all in the printed catalogue of my collection, I hope I shall be called a mercenary wretch. I deserve it.

Nothing you tell me of the Episcopal Court surprises me—he is horrible! His nephew Fitzgerald, whom his Holiness, though knowing his infernal character, had destined to put into orders and present with a rich living, had it fallen vacant, is hanged for a most atrocious murder, which has brought out others still blacker; but the story is too shocking for your good-natured feeble nerves. The great culprit Hastings's fate is not decided; but, to his and mankind's surprise, the House of Commons last week voted him on one of the articles deserving to be impeached, and Mr. Pitt declared on that article against him: so, Burke has proved to have been in the right in his prosecution.

The French prisoners have come off better than I expected. I said early, I was sure I should never understand the story: I am very sure now that I do not. Never did I like capital punishments; but, when they are committed, how comes so prodigious a robbery to escape? The Cardinal, supposing him merely a dupe, is not sufficiently punished. A Prince may be duped by a low wretch; a low man may be bubbled by a Prince: but it is not excusable in a man who has kept both the best and the worst company to be made such a tool. I would at least have sequestered his revenues, till the jewellers were paid; for I do not see why the Cardinal's family should suffer for his roguery or folly: and then I would have deprived him of his employments, as incapable. For that rascal Cagliostro, he should be punished for joining in the mummery, and shut up for his other impositions. For his legend, it is more preposterous, absurd, and incredible than anything in the 'Arabian Nights.' He is come hither—and why should one think but he may be popular here too! But enough of criminals and adventurers: though perhaps it is not much changing the theme to tell you that I have received a letter from Constantinople, as I had one from Petersburg, before that from Venice, after the heroine had left Florence. She is now gone to the Greek Isles, and bids me next direct to Vienna. I have answered none; I had a mind to direct to the Fiancée du Roi de Garbe. I shall at least stay till I hear that she is not a prize to some Corsair.

Your nephew and niece, I hear, are married. The father, I hope, will now soon make you another visit; I love to have him with you.

I talked of gratitude, but recollect that I have not even thanked you for your Cameo. I hope this looks like not being delighted with it:—how can I say such a brutal thing? I am charmed with your kindness, though I wished for no more proofs of it. In short, I don't know how to steer between my inclination for expressing my full sense of your friendship, and my pride, that is not fond of being obliged—and so very often obliged—by those I love most. Oh! but I have a much worse vice than pride (which, begging the clergy's pardon, I don't think a very heinous one, as it is a counter-poison to meanness)—I am monstrously ungrateful; I have received a thousand valuable presents from you, and yet never made you one! I shall begin to think I am avaricious too. In short, my dear Sir, your Cameo is a mirror in which I discover a thousand faults, of which I did not suspect myself, besides all those which I did know: no, no, I will not lecture Mrs. Damer, but myself. I absolve you, and am determined to think myself a prodigy of rapacity! I see there is no merit in not loving money, if one loves playthings. I have often declaimed against collectors, who will do anything mean to obtain a rarity they want: pray, is that so bad as accepting curiosities, and never making a return? Oh! I am the most ungrateful of all virtuosos, as you are the most generous of all friends! Well! the worse I think of myself, the better I think of you, and that is some compensation for the contempt I have for myself; and I will be content to serve as a foil to you. Adieu![1]

2394. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, July 5, 1786.

It is no wonder, Madam, that I durst not recommence, who know that I ought to think of nothing but finishing. Your Ladyship tells me of my *lively ideas*, and the newspapers flatter me that I am a *well-preserved veteran;* but my weak fingers, my tottering steps, and, above all, my *internal* looking-glass, are more faithful monitors, and whisper certain truths to one ear, that the sycophant self-love

[1] This is the last letter which Horace Walpole addressed to Sir Horace Mann. The illness of the latter now became serious, but he lingered on in great suffering until the 16th of November, 1786. His last moments were cheered by the kind attentions of his nephew, who immediately repaired to Florence, on learning of his uncle's illness. According to his wishes, the remains of Sir Horace Mann were brought to England, and deposited in the family vault at Linton, in Kent.—Wright.

at the other ear cannot obliterate. Indeed, I had nothing to write; I know nothing, and the sameness of summers makes me afraid of repeating what I may have said twenty times. The great lines of my little life are indeed (very contrary to my intentions and to all the colour of my progress) marked with red letters like the almanac, that is, tinged by princes and princesses.

Princess Amelie breakfasted here last week, and I have dined again at Gunnersbury, where were the Prince of Wales [George IV.] and the Prince of Mecklenburg; and that dinner produced an event which composes my whole annal. They went to drink tea at the dairy. I did not choose to limp so far, and stayed behind with Lady Barrymore, Lady Clermont, and Mrs. Howe. However, I was summoned and forced to go. It was to command me to write verses on Gunnersbury —"Lord! Madam," said I, "I am superannuated." She insisted. "Well, Madam, if I must, your Royal Highness shall have an ode on your next Birthday." All would not save me, though I protested against the rigour of the injunction. As it happened, the following trifle came into my head in the coach as I returned home:— [see p. 55.]

I sent it next morning to her breakfast, and received this gracious and genteel answer:—[see p. 55.]

To explain this, your Ladyship must know that the ancient laureate gaped in the evening at the commerce-table, which, I can tell Miss Burney, is a great sin on any Palatine hill. The moment the Princess came hither t'other morning and spied the shield with Medusa's head on the staircase, she said, "Oh! now I see where you learnt to yawn."

I am glad for *her* interest, but sorry for my own, that Evelina and Cecilia are to be transformed into a Madame de Motteville, as I shall certainly not live to read her "Memoirs," though I might another novel.[1]

I readily believe that Lord Euston's little girl is a fine child, Madam; I never saw her, but she has good claims: nor do I know where Lord Euston is absent. My nepotism is so very extended, that I cannot follow their sojournings through the maps of so many counties, nay, nor of countries.

This summer may be very fine, but it is not quite to my taste: the

[1] Miss Frances Burney, authoress of 'Evelina,' was made this year joint keeper of the Queen's Robes in the room of Madame Haggerdorn, who resigned. Miss Burney became Madame D'Arblay, and is now best known by her Diary and Letters — CUNNINGHAM

sun never appears till as late as the fashionable people in town; and then has not much more warmth. However, he has made me amends in hay: I asked why they were so long mowing one of my meadows? they said, it was so thick they could not cut it. I have really double the quantity of any other year: yet I doubt these riches will not indemnify me for the Portland sale! However, here my collection closes: I will not buy sparks, since I have acquired such a *bulse* of jewels. Adieu! Madam, the *modern* post goes out so early, that I shall scarce save it.

2395. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, July 22, 1786.

In your last, Madam, you sent me a list of topics, on which we are not to talk for fear of disagreeing. It would be exceedingly difficult for me to disagree with your Ladyship on all of them, as of some I know no more than a babe unborn; nor of the rest more than the newspapers, which are not my rule of faith, tell me. Moreover, as I neither love disputation, nor have any zeal for making converts, I shall certainly tap no subject on which I might be likely not to be of your Ladyship's sentiments. As far as I know what your political sentiments are, I should rather imagine that we do agree, for I am sure you are in the right, and I am not quite ready to think that I am in the wrong, as we neither of us ever think or act from partiality, prejudice, or motives of personal affection or resentment: and principles being less subject to be warped than our passions, it is probable that our opinions are perfectly consonant; and when that is the case, it is still more useless to discuss topics on which we already know each other's mind. A neutral person perhaps would conclude that one of us at least must be very determined to think everything right on one side and wrong on the other, when, on a medley of questions of the most heterogeneous natures, we dare not touch one for fear of squabbling. But such a person would be strangely in the dark, from not knowing that I am always ready to change my opinions in conformity to yours; and that you are so persuaded of my deference to your sentiments, that out of generosity you will not start a thought that might at first sight create a doubt in me, and that at the next minute I might adopt as being yours, before I was clearly convinced of its being well founded: though I should indubitably find it so on knowing the grounds of your reasoning

At present I am so totally in the dark on all that is passing, and whatever does happen is of so little importance to one of my age, and who has no children who will be interested in the consequences, that to save myself the trouble of uneasy prospects, I determine to think with Pope that

Whatever is, is right,

and in that composure I am secure of not disagreeing with your Ladyship.

I wish this district supplied me with any matter that would entertain you; but a village near the capital has only the news and the fish that have been hawked about in town. Poor Lord Grantham is dead, I do believe, though the papers say so; but I heard two days ago that he could not outlive the night.

I hope our daily oracles lie, according to their laudable practice, about the Whiteboys; at least, I flatter myself that our Lord's domains are unmolested by them. I am surprised they are not quieted and all made peers.

I shall go to London next week to see Mrs. Damer, who is expected from Paris. If the weather continues as cold as it has been these two last nights, I will settle for the winter.

2396. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 2, 1786.

You would have been very unjust, my dear Lady, which you are not, if you had been *seriously* angry with me for joking with you on your politics; you said you would not name them lest we should disagree: I, on my side, with the same good and peaceable intention, and who, you really know, never do dispute about anything, replied jesting. Now it would have been hard if you had been offended at my listening under Democritus, when you yourself had pointed out to me to avoid Heraclitus. I had rather be ready, with Dr. Warton, to panegyricise everything; but when he himself is reduced to generals, and can find no particular theme for an encomium, it is fair for me to resort to one of the other three divisions; for politics must range under one of the four: one must admire, lament, laugh at, or be indifferent about whatever happens.

My time of life, and the multitude of events I have seen, dispose me to indifference; but to keep up good humour, when you were afraid of our being too grave, I preferred smiling—and there I hope the matter will rest. It is for this reason I reply so soon, and because you are going to wander, and I might not know where to overtake you.

I have heard that the Duke of Bedford has ordered Mr. Palmer to have all his palaces ready for him; which is considered as an expulsion of the Queen Dowager. If it is only to make room for another antique, old woman for old woman, I should think one's own grandmother might be preferable to one that, for many reasons, might be grandmother of half London; but, as about politics, I leave everybody to judge for himself, nor is it any business of mine whether young Hamlet *speaks daggers* to Gertrude or not.

The vase for which your Ladyship is so good as to interest yourself, was not the famous Cat's *lofty vase*, nor one of any consequence, but a vase and dish of Florentine Fayence, that stood under the table in the Round Chamber; nor had I the least concern but for the company who were so grieved at the accident. With the troops that come, I am amazed I have not worse damage; however, I am sometimes diverted too. Last week a scientific lady was here, and exactly at the moment that I opened the cabinet of enamels, she turned to a gentleman who came with her, and entered into a discussion of the ides and calends. Another gentlewoman was here two days ago, who had seen a good half century: she said, "Well, I must live another *forty* years to have time to see all the curiosities of this house." These little incidents of character do not make me amends for being the master of a puppet-show, for though I generally keep behind the scenes, I am almost as much disturbed as if I constantly exhibited myself—and

Ev'n Sunday shines no Sabbath day to me![1]

P.S. I am told that this has been a fine summer—and in one respect I allow it, for it has brought the winter so forward already. that my grate was in full blow on Monday night with a good fire!

[1] Pope.—CUNNINGHAM.

2397. TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 29, 1786.

Since I received the honour of your Lordship's last, I have been at Park-place for a few days. Lord and Lady Frederick Campbell and Mrs. Damer were there. We went on the Thames to see th new bridge at Henley, and Mrs. Damer's colossal masks. There is not a sight in the island more worthy of being visited. The bridge is as perfect as if bridges were natural productions, and as beautiful as if it had been built for Wentworth Castle; and the masks, as if the Romans had left them here. We saw them in a fortunate moment; for the rest of the time was very cold and uncomfortable, and the evenings as chill as many we have had lately. In short, I am come to think that the beginning of an old ditty, which passes for a collection of blunders, was really an old English pastoral, it is so descriptive of our climate:—

> Three children sliding on the ice
> All on a summer's day——

I have been overwhelmed more than ever by visitants to my house. Yesterday I had Count Oginski,[1] who was a pretender to the crown of Poland at the last election, and has been stripped of most of a vast estate. He had on a ring of the new King of Prussia, or I should have wished him joy on the death of one of the plunderers of his country.[2]

It has long been my opinion that the out-pensioners of Bedlam are so numerous, that the shortest and cheapest way would be to confine in Moorfields the few that remain in their senses, who would then be safe; and let the rest go at large. They are the out-pensioners who are for destroying poor dogs! The whole canine race never did half so much mischief as Lord George Gordon; nor even worry hares, but when hallooed on by men. As it is a perse-

[1] Father of Count Michel Oginski, the associate of Kosciusko, and author of 'Mémoires sur la Pologne et les Polonais, depuis 1788 jusqu'à la fin de 1815;' in four volumes octavo. Paris, 1826.—Wright.

[2] Frederick the Great had died on the 17th, at Berlin.—Wright.

cution of animals, I do not love hunting; and what old writers mention as a commendation makes me hate it the more, its being an image of war. Mercy on us! that destruction of any species should be a sport or a merit! What cruel unreflecting imps we are! Everybody is unwilling to die; yet sacrifices the lives of others to momentary pastime, or to the still emptier vapour, fame! A hero or a sportsman who wishes for longer life is desirous of prolonging devastation. We shall be crammed, I suppose, with panegyrics and epitaphs on the King of Prussia; I am content that he can now have an epitaph. But, alas! the Emperor will write one for him probably in blood! and, while he shuts up convents for the sake of population, will be stuffing hospitals with maimed soldiers, besides making thousands of widows!

I have just been reading a new published History of the Colleges in Oxford, by Anthony Wood; and there found a feature in a character that always offended me, that of Archbishop Chicheley, who prompted Henry the Fifth to the invasion of France, to divert him from squeezing the overgrown clergy. When that priest meditated founding All Souls, and "consulted his friends (who seem to have been honest men) what great matter of piety he had best perform to God in his old age, he was advised by them to build an hospital for the wounded and sick soldiers that daily returned from the wars then had in France;"—I doubt his Grace's friends thought as I do of his artifice;—"but," continues the historian, "disliking those motions, and valuing the welfare of the deceased more than the wounded and diseased, he resolved with himself to promote his design, which was, to have masses said for the King, Queen, and himself, &c. while living, and for their souls when dead." And that mummery the old foolish rogue thought more efficacious than ointments and medicines for the wretches he had made! And of the chaplains and clerks he instituted in that dormitory, one was to teach grammar, and another prick-song. How History makes one shudder and laugh by turns! But I fear I have wearied your Lordship with my idle declamation, and you will repent having commanded me to send you more letters.

2398. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 30, 1786.

How the Israelites contrived to make bricks without straw, I cannot tell; though, to be sure, there are succedaneums for everything. Letters, I know, can be made of lies, as well as newspapers; and we have large manufactures at Richmond and Hampton Court wrought by old ladies themselves, as they used to make japan, by cutting prints to pieces and daubing them over with colours and varnish; and they are so generous that they give their wares to any body that will retail them. But though I am hard driven to keep up a correspondence in these halcyon days when there are no more events than in Paradise, not even a new peer made, I neither care to coin nor clip. By the way, I wonder what people will do in the next world for want of newspapers, where everything will be settled to all eternity, and where we know there is to be no marrying or giving in marriage, and then of course there will be no lyings-in, no Gretna Greens, &c., &c. Pray, Madam, do you think there will be any change of fashions? Do angels always wear the same patterns for their clothes? Oh! I find I could make a letter long enough if I were to indulge all the questions that rush into my head; but I will return to earth and grovel, as I generally do, within the bounds of my own parish. I have, indeed, been for a few days at Park-place, and seen the delight of my eyes, the new bridge at Henley—

A Senator of Rome, while Rome survived.

would have allowed it worthy of the Tiber: and it traverses a river a thousand times more beautiful; and some Verres, I suppose some time or other, will strip it of Mrs. Damer's colossal masks, and transport them to the capital of Europe, or America, or wherever that is to be. The Emperor, to be sure, intends it shall be Vienna, now the King of Prussia is dead. As I hate both those heroes, and all such captains of Banditti, I shall *go up* to Berlin with no address of condolence; not that I disdain knighthood on a good occasion, and have offered to accept it, if my *addresses* are accepted. You must know, Lady Charleville has taken a house [at Twickenham] between my niece, Mrs. Keppel, and the Duchess of Montrose. That dowager

has buried Captain Mayne, her second consort, whom she married in an arbour by moonlight, and whom she obliged to take her family name of Coghill that he might be her heir, as he was certainly fitter to be her son than her husband; and she remains possessed of 6000*l.* a year but no *child*. *Therefore* I have commissioned my two friends above mentioned to propose *me*, and to offer that I will condescend to be Sir Horatio Coghill; and if she will waive the arbour scene, she being still more gouty than I am, I engage that like old Jack Harris and his first wife, I will ring the bell and order the groom of the chamber to wheel us to one another, when we have a need to kiss. You shall know, Madam, if the treaty succeeds, and may depend on having a favour.

I admire the Duchess Dowager for holding out Woburn to the last moment. We shall now see which of the venerable matrons triumphs. I hope Duchess Nancy will call in Mr. Hastings: he would turn the old Begum into the highway in her pattens, and boast of it when he had done.

I conclude your campaign in Farming-Woods is now opening, Madam. Mr. Hatton, I hear, intends to refit Kirby, and inhabit it. and as he has the true patina of the Finches,—

Will breathe a browner horror on the woods.

I like the restoration of those ancient palaces, and I suppose it will now be accessible as this age has invented good roads, which our worthy ancestors did not think at all a necessary ingredient in living comfortably. We are so effeminate that we hate being jolted to death, or dug out of a hollow way—but every thing degenerates!

Mr. Fox, I am told, is at Cheltenham, entirely occupied with taming a young rabbit. This is Mr. Hare's account; but he is partial. For my part I suspect that he is teaching it to exercise that terrible weapon a dessert-knife. But whether he is or not, I think there ought to be an Act of Parliament against eating any thing but spoon-meat.

Lady Charleville has just sent me a flat refusal; so that if I have a mind to have children of my own to inherit Strawberry, I must look for—

Arbutei fœtus alibi—

This is a little disappointment; but when one has threescore nephews and nieces, one cannot want heirs. Nay, I still want a month of sixty-nine—*nous verrons*.

2399. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 28, 1786.

As I conclude, Madam, that by this time you are, at least, as real an inhabitant of the woods as Peter the Wild Boy, or that guileless savage the Marquis of Lansdowne, who would make one believe, like Biddy Tipkin in the 'Tender Husband,' "that he lives on hips and haws, and is mighty fond of pignuts;" I direct to Farming-Woods rather than to the honour of Ampthill. I should have answered your last sooner, but had nothing to tell you; and at present all my gleanings would not load a parish girl's little paw. Except the sad deaths of two happy young women, Lady Graham and Lady Harriet Elliot, I know no event but the death of Mr. Charles Hamilton, one of my patriarchs of modern gardening, who has been killed by Anstey, author of the 'Bath Guide.'

Mr. Hamilton, who had built a house in the Crescent, was also at eighty-three eager in planting a new garden, and wanted some acres, which Anstey, his neighbour, not so ancient, destined to the same use. Hamilton wrote a warm letter on their being refused; and Anstey, who does not hate a squabble in print, as he has more than once shown, discharged shaft upon shaft against the poor veteran, and—

> The grey goose quill that was thereon
> In his heart's blood was wet;

for he died of the volley, as even a goose-quill will do the feat at eighty-three, and surely, since the *first* edition of the 'Bath Guide,' never was a duller goose than Anstey! This is a literary anecdote, not much known, I believe, in the coffee-houses on Parnassus.

I was last week of a small party at Lady Clifford's at Richmond, and half of the company consisted of pinchbeck royalties, for there were the grandmother Princess Dowager Mrs. Molyneux, her son-in-law, Mr. Smyth, father of Ines de Castro, his sister, Lady Langdale, and I. Lady Mary Coke, who envies us for having mixed our alloy with the standard, when her own counterfeit is but a Birmingham shilling that never had the impress and titles on it, would swear that we met to hatch a new Gunpowder Plot. It is incredible how she has toiled tooth and nail to couple Ines with Margery Nicholson.

For my part, the rencontre put me in mind of Lady Dorchester, who meeting the Duchess of Portsmouth and Lady Orkney[1] in the drawing-room at Windsor in the beginning of George I., cried out, "Heavens! who would have thought that we three royal w——s should meet here!"

Oct. 1st.

I began my letter three days ago, and it was barren enough, so I postponed it on a prospect of imperial recruits. I had notice that the Archduke and Archduchess desired a ticket to see

My gothic Vatican of Greece and Rome,[2]

and that I would name the day. I replied, I could not presume to send a ticket, or name a day, but that their Royal Highnesses might command me and my nutshell whenever they pleased, if they would be so good as to excuse such a reception as a decrepit old man could give them. Accordingly I made no preparation but of coffee, tea, and chocolate; and as I am a courtier of the old rock, *only two cups* were set for their arch-highnesses in the Round Chamber, and none for their suite. In two days I could not make an entertainment, nor do I pique myself on vulgar ostentation, nor could light up the garden with coloured lamps by daylight, and when the leaves are falling and my orange-trees gone into winter quarters. It was intimated that I might expect them to-day. The morning was of the best October gold, and the sun himself came to do the honours of my house; however, I began to fear they would serve him as they did at Hampton Court, and not arrive till six o'clock; but at near two, as I sat watching for Heyducs and Pandours to come powdering down my avenue, I saw a gang of foot-passengers in boots and riding-dresses strolling from Twickenham, holiday folks as I thought,—but at last one of the troop ran before, who, I perceived, was the Venetian resident. I hurried down to the gate, and the resident named the Archduke and Madame—and Prince and Princess Albani, &c., in short, they were eleven.

Well! they have been here above an hour, were exceedingly civil, totally unceremonious, commended everything, were really charmed with the situation and views, especially the Archduke; and Prince Albani, who does know, marked the right pictures, and they all fell

[1] The mistresses of Charles II., James II., and William III. Lady Dorchester was the daughter of Sir Charles Sedley, the wit.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] Pope.—CUNNINGHAM.

pell-mell on the biscuits and bread and butter, but tasted nothing liquid. The Archduke is rather a little man, and if Mr. Hare were to ask, as he did Garrick, whether he looked much like an *eagle*, I could not say yes. The Archduchess is not a beauty, but better than I had heard, seems sensible, and is very conversant in our history. I had rummaged that old garret, my memory, for recollections of the month I passed at the Fair of Reggio, with the Archduchess's grandsire and grandam, the Duke and Duchess of Modena, in the year of our Lord 1741. I had recalled the serene Duke's figure, with a mound of vermilion on the left side of his forehead to symmetrise with a wen on the right, and his sister, the Princess Benedict, who was painted and peeled like an old summer-house, with bristles on her chin sprouting through a coat of plaister,—but I did not intend to draw these portraits; and, above all things, put a gag on my tongue, lest it should blurt out the dreadful compliment I blundered on to the Duchess of Modena on her own mother's jealousy of her. But I had no occasion for my caution; there was such a Babel of Italian dialect, and the Archduke has such a very sharp *faussette*, that my meek voice could not be distinguished. Well! it is happily over: they expressed satisfaction, and, at least, were better pleased than with their *no* reception at Blenheim by the Prince of Mindleheim.

This detail, which I might have given in fewer words, and was not worth giving at all, may fill up a chink in an evening after a whole morning's shooting.

P.S. The Austrian ovation came to me from Pope's, whence they had sent their coaches to the inn.

2400. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 13, 1786.

Far be it from me, Madam, to think that you ought to answer my letters incontinently. They very seldom contain anything that requires or deserves a reply. Your own last lay long before I wrote again. In fact, this only comes to ask if you did receive one that I sent on Monday was se'nnight, directed to Farming-Woods, where the time of year made me conclude you were. If it lies there till this time twelvemonth, it will not signify; but I would not have

your Ladyship think that I have been still more remiss than I really have been. Though indolence would be very excusable at my age, want of matter is oftener the cause of my silence. Therefore, when I have spun three pages out of nothing, I like to have the merit of the deed; and as you will give me credit for the assertion, your gamekeeper is welcome to light his pipe with my epistle.

2401. TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.[1]

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 18, 1786.

I AM much obliged to you, dear Sir, for the notice, and your kind intentions. I have various copies of King Charles's Collection; but the one you mention is probably more curious, and what I should be very glad to have; and if I can afford it, will give whatever shall be thought reasonable; for I would by no means take advantage of the poor man's ignorance or necessity. I therefore should wish to have it estimated by some connoisseur; and though the notes may be foolish, they would not prejudice the information I should like to get. I must go to town on Friday, and will call on you; and if you cannot be at home, be so good as to leave the MS., and I will bring it back to you the next day, or Sunday, as I return hither.

Yours sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

2402. TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 29, 1786.

I WAS sorry not to be apprised of your intention of going to town, where I would have met you; but I knew it too late, both as I was engaged, and as you was to return so soon. I mean to come to Park-place in a week or fortnight; but I should like to know what company you expect, or do not expect; for I had rather fill up your vacancies than be a supernumerary.

Lady Ossory has sent me two charades made by Colonel Fitz-

[1] Now first collected.—CUNNINGHAM.

patrick: the first she says is very easy, the second very difficult. I have not come within sight of the easy one; and, though I have a guess at the other, I do not believe I am right; and so I send them to you, who are master-general of the Œdipuses.

The first, that is so easy:—

In concert, song, or serenade,
My first requires my second's aid.
To those residing near the pole
I would not recommend my whole.

The two last lines, I conclude, neither connect with the two first, nor will help one to decipher them.

The difficult one:—

Charades of all things are the worst,
But yet my best have been my first.
Who with my second are concern'd,
Will to despise my whole have learn'd.

This sounds like a good one, and therefore I will not tell you my solution; for, if it is wrong, it might lead you astray; and if it is right, it would prove the charade is not a good one. Had I anything better, I would not send you charades, unless for the name of the author.

I have had a letter from your brother, who tells me that he has his grandson Stewart[1] with him, who is a prodigy. I say to myself,

Prodigies are grown so frequent,
That they have lost their name.

I have seen prodigies in plenty of late, ay, and formerly too; but divine as they have all been, each has had a mortal heel, and has trodden back a vast deal of their celestial path! I beg to be excused from any more credulity.

I am sorry you have lost your fac-totum Stokes. I suppose he had discovered that he was too necessary to you. Every day cures one of reliance on others; and we acquire a prodigious stock of

[1] Robert, eldest son of Robert Stewart, by Lady Sarah-Frances Seymour, second daughter of Francis, first Marquis of Hertford; afterwards so distinguished in the political world as Viscount Castlereagh.—WRIGHT. "You are always good to my family; I therefore venture to acquaint you, that I have now with me here [Sudborne Hall] a grandson by my late daughter Sarah, who is in every respect an uncommon, and the most promising young man I ever saw." *Lord Hertford to Horace Walpole, Oct.* 23, 1786. (*MS.*)—CUNNINGHAM.

experience, by the time that we shall cease to have occasion for any. Well! I am not clear but making or solving charades is as wise as anything we can do. I should pardon professed philosophers if they would allow that their wisdom is only trifling, instead of calling their trifling wisdom. Adieu!

2403. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 4, 1786.

When I, in the heart of these populous villages, can glean so little worth repeating, I do not wonder, Madam, that Farming-Woods are still less productive—and without events and news, or business, what idle, affected, and unnatural things are letters! I sent a postscript after mine, because I thought, as did happen, that the direction was wrong. Now I can only reply to a few paragraphs, and return thanks for the charades; but easy or difficult, I have solved neither: people without teeth can no more eat an apple than crack a nut. I did guess at the more mysterious one, and thought it might be a *spelling-book*, but that solution is so awkward, that I think the enigma would not be worthy of Mr. Fitzpatrick. For Mrs. West's verses, I do not think I shall tap them. The milk-woman at Bristol has made me sick of mendicant poetesses. If deep distresses and poverty cannot sow gratitude in the human heart, nor balance vanity and jealousy, these slip-shod Muses must sing better than they do, before I will lend an ear to them. Miss Hannah More is the best of our numerous Calliopes; and her heart is worth all Pindus. Misses Seward and Williams, and half-a-dozen more of those harmonious virgins, have no imagination, no novelty. Their thoughts and phrases are like their gown, old remnants cut and turned.

Mr. Selwyn had a bad fever in Gloucestershire, but is recovered and returned to Richmond. My good old friend, Sir Horace, whom your Ladyship is so kind as to mention, was alive when the newspapers killed him. I scarce dare affirm that he is so now, as his excellent nephew, the younger Sir Horace, who posted to him on hearing of his danger, gives me small hopes of his lasting; but why should I hope it? He suffers, is eighty-five, and perfectly resigned to his fate!

It is being very fickle to go out of the fashion when the fashion adapts itself to me: yet except one day's lameness, and constant

chalky rills from my fingers, I have had no gout this summer. If the Duchess of Devonshire has, and retains the diadem of fashion still (a long reign in so unstable a kingdom), I suppose the ladies of her court will recall their chins, and thrust out a shoe wadded with flannel. Then it will be an easy transition to the *Béquille du Père Barnabas!* I recommend the tune to Colonel Fitzpatrick.

Lord and Lady Waldegrave have been with me two or three days, and to-day have sent me a confirmation of several of Princess Amelie's legacies as you have seen in the papers; but thus particularly:—

To Ladies Elizabeth and Caroline Waldegrave, each 4000*l. in money*. This she told me, on Lady Waldegrave's death, she intended, and so she did to this Lord. To the two brothers of the Landgrave of Hesse 20,000*l.* a piece, and they are to be residuary legatees.

To Lady Anne Howard, 5000*l.* To Lady Barrymore, 3000*l.* To Lady Templetown, 2000*l.* stock. To Lady Anne Noel the interest of 5000*l.* for life. Small legacies to all her servants. To her executors, Lords Besborough and Pelham, 1000*l.* stock. The jewels to the Duchess of Brunswick.

Gunnersbury and her house in town to be sold.

Lord Besborough not being well enough, and Lord Pelham not in town, Lord Duncannon went to the King to know if he chose to be present at the reading of the Will, which he declined; but has since sent Lord Sydney to one of the ladies of the bedchamber to ask if previous to her death she had expressed any wishes not inserted in her Will, and to say he would fulfil whatever had been her desire. The Princess is to be buried this day se'nnight at the King's expense, and the mourning to commence the next day.

The Will seems to me a proper and a kind one; and surely neither her life nor death deserved the infamous abuse of the newspapers, which is as false as the exaggeration of her wealth. History, I believe, seldom contains much truth; but should our daily lying chronicles exist and be consulted, the annals of these days will deserve as little credit as the 'Arabian Nights.'

2404. TO LADY CRAVEN.[1]

Berkeley Square, Nov. 27, 1786.

To my extreme surprise, Madam, when I knew not in what quarter of the known or unknown world you was resident or existent, my maid in Berkeley Square sent me to Strawberry Hill a note from your Ladyship, offering to call on me for a moment,—for a whirlwind, I suppose, was waiting at your door to carry you to Japan; and, as balloons have not yet settled any post-offices in the air, you could not, at least did not, give me any direction where to address you, though you did kindly reproach me with my silence. I must enter into a little justification before I proceed. I heard from you from Venice, then from Poland, and then, having whisked through Tartary, from Petersburg; but still with no directions. I said to myself, "I will write to Grand Cairo, which, probably, will be her next stage." Nor was I totally in the wrong, for there came a letter from Constantinople, with a design mentioned of going to the Greek Islands, and orders to write to you at Vienna; but with no banker or other address specified.

For a great while I had even stronger reasons than these for silence. For several months I was disabled by the gout from holding a pen; and you must know, Madam, that one can't write when one cannot write. Then, how write to *la Fiancée du Roi de Garbe?*

[1] Elizabeth Berkeley, daughter of Augustus, fourth Earl of Berkeley. In 1767 she was married to William, who, in 1769, succeeded his uncle as sixth Lord Craven: she had seven children by him; but, after a union of thirteen years, a separation taking place, she left England for France, and travelled in Italy, Austria, Poland, Russia, Turkey, and Greece. In 1789 she published her 'Journey through the Crimea to England.' Subsequently, she settled at Anspach, and, becoming a widow in September, 1791, was united in the following month to the Margrave of Anspach; who, having sold his principality to the King of Prussia, settled in England, where he died in 1806. In 1825 the Margravine published her 'Memoirs.' She died at Naples, in 1828.—Wright. Compare Walpole to Ossory, 4th Feb., 1773. Walpole wrote the following verses on Lady Craven's portrait by Romney, of which there is an engraving in this Work:

> Full many an Artist has on canvas fix'd
> All charms that Nature's pencil ever mix'd,
> The witching of her eyes, the grace that tips
> The inexpressible douceur of her lips:
> Romney alone in this fair image caught
> Each charm's expression, and each feature's thought;
> And shows how in their sweet assembly sit,
> Taste, spirit, softness, sentiment, and wit.
>
> —Cunningham.

You had been in the tent of the Cham of Tartary, and in the harem of the Captain Pacha, and, during your navigation of the Ægean, were possibly fallen into the terrible power of a corsair. How could I suppose that so many despotic infidels would part with your charms? I never expected you again on Christian ground. I did not doubt your having a talisman to make people in love with you; but anti-talismans are quite a new specific.

Well, while I was in this quandary, I received a delightful drawing of the Castle of Otranto;[1] but still provokingly without any address. However, my gratitude for so very agreeable and obliging a present could not rest till I found you out. I wrote to the Duchess of Richmond, to beg she would ask your brother Captain Berkeley for a direction to you; and he has this very day been so good as to send me one, and I do not lose a moment in making use of it.

I give your Ladyship a million of thanks for the drawing, which was really a very valuable gift to me. I did not even know that there was a Castle of Otranto. When the story was finished, I looked into the map of the kingdom of Naples for a well-sounding name, and that of Otranto was very sonorous. Nay, but the drawing is so satisfactory, that there are two small windows, one over another, and looking into the country, that suit exactly to the small chambers from one of which Matilda heard the young peasant singing beneath her. Judge how welcome this must be to the author; and thence judge, Madam, how much you must have obliged him.

When you take another flight towards the bounds of the western ocean, remember to leave a direction. One cannot always shoot flying. Lord Chesterfield directed a letter to the late Lord Pembroke, who was always swimming, "To the Earl of Pembroke in the Thames, over against Whitehall." That was sure of finding him within a certain number of fathom; but your Ladyship's longitude varies so rapidly, that one must be a good bowler indeed, to take one's ground so judiciously that by casting wide of the mark one may come in near to the jack.

[1] There is an engraving of it in 'Walpole's Works.'—CUNNINGHAM

2405. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 1, 1786.

Oh! yes, Madam, I am ready to continue playing at questions and commands, if you please, since you are content with such answers as I, simple man, can send you. I have no character to sustain, and don't care a straw how silly my letters are, if you find they fill up some of your idle moments. I am sure I have nothing better to do, and it was for your sake that I proposed *passing eldest.*

No, I am not at all struck with the letter of Beaumarchais, except with its insolence. Such a reproof might become Cato the Censor, in defence of such a tragedy as Addison's, on his descendant: but for such a *vaurien* as Beaumarchais, and for such a contemptible farce as 'Figaro,' it was paramount impertinence towards the Duke, and gross ill-breeding towards the ladies. Besides, I abhor vanity in authors; it would offend in Milton or Montesquieu; in a Jack-pudding it is intolerable. I know no trait of arrogance recorded of Molière—and to talk of the 'Marriage of Figaro' as *instructive!* Punch might as well pretend to be moralising when he sells a bargain. In general, the modern *Gens de Lettres* in France, as they call themselves, are complete puppies. They have beaten up their native pertness with the brutality of the ancient philosophers, and would erect themselves into a Tribunal of Dictators: they lay down laws impertinently, and employ affronts and insults as penalties. The *literati,* on the revival of learning, were less intolerable, for they only threw dirt, and called names in coarse Latin, which nobody but a Roman scavenger could have understood. The present fry are saucy, and quaint, and distorted, and void of all simplicity. What a forced affected phrase is *begueules mitigées!*

The history of Lactilla of Bristol is worse; she is a *begueule* not *mitigée.* Her ingratitude to Miss More has been superlative. The latter laboured unweariedly to collect subscriptions for her, and was at expense herself for the publication; and lest the husband, who is a dolt, should waste the sum collected, placed it out at interest for her as trustee, besides having washed and combed her trumpery verses, and taught them to dance in tune. The foolish woman's head, turned with this change of fortune and applause, and concluding that her talent, which was only wonderful from her sphere and state of ignorance, was marvellous genius, she grew enraged at

Miss More for presuming to prune her wild shoots, and, in her passion, accused her benevolent and beneficent friend of defrauding her of part of the collected charity. In short, she has abused Miss More grossly, has written a volume of scurrility against her, and is really to be pitied, as she is grown extravagant and ostentatious. Am I in the wrong, Madam, for thinking that these parish Sapphos had better be bound 'prentices to mantua-makers, than be appointed chambermaids to Mesdemoiselles the Muses?

I am sorry the knight of the brush has also now and then some human delinquencies—but alas! everybody has a heel or a finger not dipped in Styx—or rather, I think we should say, that has been dipped in Styx. I went t'other day, when I was in town, to see the Sacraments of Poussin that he has purchased from Rome for the Duke of Rutland.[1] I remember when I saw them there, a thousand years ago, that I was not much enchanted. I rather like them better now than I expected, at least two or three of them—but they are really only coloured bas-reliefs, and old Romans don't make good Christians. There are two of Baptism; Sir Joshua said, What could he mean by painting two? I said, I concluded the second was Anabaptism. Sir Joshua himself has bought a profile of Oliver Cromwell, which he thinks the finest miniature by Cooper he ever saw. But all his own geese are swans, as the swans of others are geese. It is most clearly a copy, and not a very good one; the outline very hard, the hair and armour very flat and tame.[2] He would not show me his Russian Hercules. I fancy he has discovered that he was too sanguine about the commission, as you say.

The town was ringing about your old neighbour of the north, Countess Strathmore, and the enormous barbarities of her husband, who beat her for six days and nights

> Round Stainmore's wintry wild,

for which the myrmidons of the King's Bench have knocked his brains out—almost. This, and Lady Cathcart's long imprisonment,

[1] Nicholas Poussin painted two sets of the Seven Sacraments; the smaller set is the one alluded to by Walpole—the larger set passed with other Orleans pictures into the Bridgewater Gallery.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] Sir Joshua left his Cromwell miniature to Richard Burke, from whom it descended through the Crewes to its present possessor Richard Monckton Milnes, Esq., M.P. It is a poor copy—and not by Cooper—of the profile Devonshire miniature.—CUNNINGHAM.

[3] "Sarah Malyn, Lady Cathcart, who died in 1789, aged 98. She had four husbands, of whom Lord Cathcart was the third; the fourth was a Captain Macguire, an Irish officer, who, not much pleased with the posy on her wedding ring—



THE DUKE OF QUEENSBERRY.

ought to make wealthy widows a little cautious of M'Philanders—but the Lord knows whether it will.

Lord Chewton is perfectly well. He was here lately with his parents. Soon after my neighbour, Sir Robert Goodere,[1] made me a visit, and said he had been a little doubtful whether he might come as he heard the Princess Elizabeth was to come to Strawberry Hill for the air. Heavens! Sir Robert! what can you mean? Princess Elizabeth with me? you must dream, or imagine that Princess Elizabeth Luttrel is with me. At last I found out that he had seen Lord Waldegrave's servants in the Queen's livery here, and the rest was the product of his own reasoning upon that phenomenon. Such is the birth of half the stories circulated; and had he communicated his conjecture to the village before I set him right, in three days that vision would have been in the newspapers.

I went yesterday to see the Duke of Queensberry's palace at Richmond, under the conduct of George Selwyn, the *concierge*. You cannot imagine how noble it looks now all the Cornbury pictures from Amesbury are hung up there. The great hall, the great gallery, the eating-room, and the corridor, are covered with whole and half-lengths of royal family, favourites, ministers, peers, and judges, of the reign of Charles I.—not one an original, I think, at least not one fine,[2] yet altogether they look very respectable; and the house is so handsome, and the views so rich, and the day was so fine, that I could only have been more pleased if (for half an hour) I could have seen the real palace that once stood on that spot, and the persons represented walking about!—A visionary holiday in old age, though it has not the rapture of youth, is a sedate enjoyment that is more sensible because one attends to it and reflects upon it at the time; and as new tumults do not succeed, the taste remains long in one's memory's mouth.

P.S. I was told t'other night that Lady Cathcart, who is still living, danced lately at Hertford, to show her vigour at past four score—ware an Abbé de Gedoyn! She would risk another incar-

If I survive,
I will have five—

took her to Ireland, and kept her there in solitary durance for twenty years, when he died, and her Ladyship came back to dance at the Welwyn Assembly. Some details of her treatment are told in 'Castle Rackrent.'" *Croker, Quart. Rev., June*, 1848, p. 115.—CUNNINGHAM.

[1] After Mrs. Clive's death, Sir Robert lived at Cliveden.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] Compare vol. i. p. 6, and vol. ii. p. 223 and p. 256.—CUNNINGHAM.

ceration;—it is woful to have a colt's tooth when folks have no other left!

2406. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 12, 1786.

I PRETEND to neither judgment nor taste, Madam, and I am sure I am in the wrong when I dislike what Lady Ravensworth, Lord Ossory, and Mr. Fitzpatrick approve: and yet, instead of condemning contrary to my opinion, I rather doubt whether your Ladyship does not commend more than you think the letter deserves, for your unalterable good humour makes you always set everything in the best light possible. *Modified brimstones*, I own, did sound to me too harsh an expression to be used of women of quality, in a country that piques itself on being the standard of good breeding; but one every day learns to correct one's original ideas, which are generally the fruits of ignorance. I imagined that the ladies scarce gave as a reason for asking for Beaumarchais's box, that they supposed his play was indecent—at least I know that that is not the object of *loges grillées*, nor could be for this plain reason, that the French stage does not allow of indecencies. *Des loges grillées*, I believe, are for the purpose of going undressed, and are used at all the chastest old plays. I know I have been in one at a tragedy with Mesdames de Luxembourg and Du Deffand; and therefore I was naturally enough led into the mistake of thinking that Beaumarchais had given himself an impertinent air on a very common occasion. If his farce was reckoned indelicate, it was he that had offended the custom, not the ladies; *mais peut-être qu'on a changé tout cela;* and the austere Beaumarchais, like stern Lycurgus, may insist on ladies descending stark naked into the arena, and wrestling with gladiators, to show that genuine modesty does not wear a mask.

When I have said thus much, I know how much I am guided by prejudices: I have an aversion to the dictatorial pertness of the modern French authors, and cannot conceive that their very flimsy talents can entitle them to an importance that would mis-become Racine himself. In truth, except for such a predominant genius as Shakspeare or Milton, I hold authors cheap enough: what merit is there in pains, and study, and application, compared with the extempore abilities of such men as Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, or Mr. Pitt? What puerile matters are the Orations of Cicero, com-

posed, corrected, and re-written at fifty or sixty years of age, in comparison of what start and flow and overflow from our prodigies, the moment they are men? It is from being so proud of my countrymen that I betrayed so much contempt of the frogs of the French Hippocrene, and I hope I have a little disculpated myself for the disrespect I showed to what your Ladyship liked, and was so good as to send me.

I came to town the middle of last week, to quit the damps that made me much out of order, but the smoke of London soon recovered me. I dined with the Duchess of Bedford on Sunday, as she was to have no company but the two Misses Pelham, Miss Lloyd, and Admiral Pigot; yet though three Misses sound very young, your Ladyship is sensible it was not a very callow party. I shall be more juvenile to-night, for I am going to Mrs. Cowley's new play,[1] which I suppose is as *instructive* as the 'Marriage of Figaro,' for I am told it approaches to those of Mrs. Behn in Spartan delicacy; but I shall see Miss Farren,[2] who, in my poor opinion, is the first of all actresses.

Of news I have not heard a tittle since I arrived. To give them their due, the houses in London are of themselves as quiet, good sort of houses as any in the universe, and it is only when they are brimful that they produce so many strange scenes every day.

2407. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 15, 1786.

Instead of being too prolix, I think you are very condescending, Madam, to enter into my cavils and discuss them with me; but you are not so gracious when you suspect my *douceurs* of irony, which would reduce me to weigh my words, and then I should have no satisfaction in chatting with you. I set down the first thing that comes into my head, foolish or not; for instance, the moment I had written the last paragraph of my last, I knew it was silly, but I could not take the trouble of writing my letter again; and, in truth, I have a little partiality for nonsense. We are so much in the dark

[1] 'School for Greybeards, or the Mourning Bride.' Miss Farren played Donna Seraphina. Mrs. Cowley has borrowed in this play pretty freely from Mrs. Behn.—Cunningham.

[2] Miss Elizabeth Farren, afterwards Countess of Derby.—Cunningham.

about most things, that when we attempt to reason, we often fall into great absurdities; but giving the reins to nonsense, it is heads or tails whether we do not light upon sense.

Antigallican I was literally, when I found fault with Beaumarchais's epistle, but not politically so, God knows, nor in a fury. At past sixty-nine my tow and tinder are pretty well exhausted, and I should be ashamed to go out of the world in a fury about anything. About the commercial treaty it is impossible I should be in one, for it is most strictly true that I have not read a single article, and for this plain reason, that I should not understand a syllable of it. I understand trade no more than I do Coptic, and being much disposed to amuse myself for the little time I have left, I waste none of it on what I do not comprehend. Many years ago a person, who was never sorry to tell me my truths, said to me, "You understand several out of the way things, but you know nothing that is common or useful." This was true, then, and alas! is so to this hour, and will continue so for a few more; and therefore, good or bad, the commercial treaty could have no share in my censure of the letter, nor will occasion a wrinkle on the surface of my thoughts. All I can say on the subject is, that the treaty being good, he must be a bad Whig that is angry at it, let who will have made it.

I know nothing of the milkwoman's new edition, and certainly shall not send for it. When people disappoint me and prove very worthless, I have done with them, and suppose they don't exist.

'The Greybeards' have certainly been chastised, for we did not find them at all gross. The piece is farcical and improbable, but has some good things, and is admirably acted. 'Cœur de Lion' did not answer; nor was I much charmed with the music; but my ear is too bad to judge at first hearing. The scenes are excellent; Mrs. Jordan is quite out of her character, and makes nothing of the part; and the turning the ferocious Richard into a tender husband is intolerable. If an historic subject is good but wants alteration, why will not an author take the canvas, cut it to his mind, but give new names to the personages? It only makes a confusion in one's ideas, to maim a known story.

You guessed rightly, Madam: I certainly should have been distracted to have risked my letters to Sir Horace being printed. Though I could not write very freely through the gutters of so many post-offices, I did not desire Europe should see what I thought of its sovereigns, who were chiefly our *dramatis personæ*. Sir Horace the nephew brought away my letters at different times; and as he was

there at his dear uncle's death he will secure the rest, which are not a dozen.

For the new edition of Shakspeare,[1] it did not at all captivate me. In the first place I did not subscribe for my heirs and executors as it would have been, when the term of completion is twelve years hence; but I am not favourable to sets of prints for authors. I scarce know above one well-executed, 'Coypell's Don Quixote,' but mercy on us! *Our* painters to design for *Shakspeare!* His commentators have not been more inadequate. Pray, who is to give an idea of Falstaff now Quin is dead? And then Bartolozzi, who is only fit to engrave for the 'Pastor fido,' will be to give a pretty enamelled fan-mount of Macbeth! Salvator Rosa might, and Piranesi might dash out Duncan's Castle; but Lord help Alderman Boydell and the Royal Academy!

Lord Macartney I have seen twice; he is quite well. I was at Lady Macartney's last night: I told them of your Ladyship's inquiries. They have got a charming house in Curzon-street, and cheap as old clothes. It was Lord Carteret's, and all antiqued and grotesqued by Adam, with an additional room in the court fourscore feet long, then dedicated to orgies and now to books.

Thus I have answered all your Ladyship's questions *tant bien que mal;* and now after telling you a short story, will take my leave.

Lady Louvain wished to see Mademoiselle D'Eon, and Mr. Dutens invited her. The Lady asked her if she had ever been at Dijon, and said she herself had lain in there. "I have been there," said Miss Hector, "but did not lie in there, *car je suis vierge, et pour que les vierges accouchent, il faut qu'elles aillent à Jerusalem.*" It was impertinent to Lady Louvain, and worse in a clergyman's house; but women of fashion should not go aboard Amazons.

2408. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 22, 1786

Your Ladyship is so apt to refine, that give me leave to say, your penetration sometimes a little overshoots itself. You tell me that Lord Ossory says you *must* believe that I have not read the commercial treaty, which rather implies that you were not so disposed. Now I do not see what credit was to result to me from

[1] Boydell's great work:—engravings from pictures painted by English painters expressly for the edition of Shakespeare bearing Boydell's name.—Cunningham.

not having read it. Most people would think that I ought to have examined a matter of national importance; and few men perhaps would have owned so frankly, that my reason for not reading it was that I could not understand it. Yet so the whole fact was; and though I think it less despicable to affect ignorance than to pretend to know what one does not, there was not a grain of affectation or untruth in the case. I have lived too long not to despise art which is the *filigraine* of a little mind; and were I to grow cunning now, I should probably be under ground before my *finesse* could achieve any *tour* of legerdemain.

Had you been content with less shrewdness, Madam, you would not have slid into another error; you saw that I had first written *family* for *academy*, as was very plain I had—and then you concluded that I had substituted the latter word out of prudence, for it seems that in your Ladyship's eyes I am grown all on a sudden a miracle of circumspection. But had you considered a moment you would have seen that it was impossible I could ever have meant to write *family*, and that my pen, by inattention, must have written *royal family*, from the greater familiarity of the phrase; for, I beseech you, are the *royal family* to design the prints for Shakspeare? With all my respect for nonsense, I never meant to write one word for another which would not be too foolish but drunk; and I must have swallowed two bottles before I could lament that the royal family were incapable of giving a just drawing of Macbeth. I might as well have said that I did not read the treaty because Mrs. Siddons had negotiated it.

You will perhaps, Madam, discover some close policy, when I tell you that I have not even seen the new volume of 'Lord Clarendon's Papers;' yet it is what I must say, if I answer you with truth. Nay, I even never did look into the former volume. I was tired of those times before they appeared. I had read and written as much as I chose about my Lord Clarendon, and did not care to return to the subject. Mere personal amusement is all I seek now, and I would sooner return to Mother Goose's Tales than to the gravity of the former century. Gout, and pain, and confinement have made me hate everything serious, and I try to paint all my thoughts *couleur de rose*, which is *my* philosophy.

I am not surprised that there should be a great party for the milkwoman. The wise people of Bristol have taken it into their heads that they have a manufacture of original genius *chez eux*, and the less foundation they have for their credulity, the stronger their

faith is, as always is the case of fools. Great was the Diana of the Ephesians, though they made the image themselves. If Lactilla puts gin into her milk and kills herself, she will be immortal, and Mr. Hayley and Mr. Cumberland will write hymns to her—with all my heart.

Lady Anne's good sense and just observations are not only doubly hereditary, but the consequence of the very rational education you give her, Madam. Truth is natural to youth, and I believe would produce a good portion of sense too, if they did not hear and see so much falsehood, as they find by degrees, in the commerce of the world; and which they receive with respect, because it comes from elder persons, who they conclude act rightly. People are afraid of trusting the indiscretion of their children and do not tell them, Such a gentleman is a rascal, Such an one a fool—nay, I can recollect having believed that several persons were sensible, because I heard others say they were so; and I had not then learnt to ask silently the leading question,—"How do *you* know whether they are sensible or not?" Lady Anne seems to do so already, and, therefore, will not easily be a dupe. Commonly we have not a stock of experience, till it is of little or no use. We want it most when we are coming *into* the world. Sages, who are proud of it when they do not want it, are sometimes so generous as to bequeath their hoard to posterity —and posterity value it no more than a mourning ring.

I have lost another old acquaintance, Lady Beaulieu.[1] As there are not above half a dozen persons left now who were on the stage to my knowledge when I became a spectator, I should be weak indeed if I interested myself much in what happens on a theatre where the principal actors are twenty, thirty, or forty years younger than I am. My old remembrancer, the gout, who never lets me forget myself long, is come, since I wrote the former part of this last night, into my left hand, and I must suspend my manœuvres, I suppose, for some weeks, for he seldom makes his visit superficially, so I can only be a *visitée;* and the weather is so sharp that I am not sorry to remain in my own chimney-corner.

[1] Hussey's Duchess of Manchester. Hussey (Lord Beaulieu) survived till 1802.—CUNNINGHAM.

2409. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 1, 1787.

Do not imagine, dear Madam, that I pretend in the most distant manner to pay you for charming poetry with insipid prose; much less that I acquit a debt of gratitude for flattering kindness and friendship by a meagre tale that does not even aim at celebrating you. No; I have but two motives for offering you the accompanying trifle:[1] the first, to prove that the moment I have finished anything, *you* are of the earliest in my thoughts: the second, that, coming from my press, I wish it may be added to your Strawberry editions. It is so far from being designed for the public, that I have printed but forty copies; which I do not mention to raise its value, though it will with mere collectors, but lest you should lend it and lose it, when I may not be able to supply its place.

Christina, indeed, has some title to connection with you, both from her learning and her moral writings; as you are justly entitled to a lodging in her 'Cité des Dames,' where, I am sure, her three patronesses would place you, as a favourite *élève* of some of their still more amiable sisters, who must at this moment be condoling with their unfortunate sister Gratitude, whose vagabond foundling has so basely disgraced her and herself. You fancied that Mrs. Yearsley was a spurious issue of a Muse; and to be sure, with all their immortal virginity, the parish of Parnassus has been sadly charged with their bantlings; and, as nobody knows the fathers, no wonder some of the misses have turned out woful reprobates!

2410. TO LADY CRAVEN.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 2, 1787.

Your Ladyship tells me that you have kept a journal of your travels: you know not when your friends at Paris will give you time to put it *au net*; that is, I conclude and hope, prepare it for the press. I do not wonder that those friends, whether talismanic or others, are so assiduous, if you indulge them: but, unless they are of the former description, they are unpardonable, if they know what they interrupt; and deserve much more that you should wish they had

[1] Christine de Pisc.—Berry.

fallen into a ditch, than the poor gentlemen who sigh more to see you in sheets of holland than of paper. To me the mischief is enormous. How proud I should be to register a noble authoress of my own country, who has travelled over more regions and farther than any female in print! Your Ladyship has visited those islands and shores whence formerly issued those travelling sages and legislators who sought and imported wisdom, laws, and religion into Greece; and though we are so perfect as to want none of those commodities, the fame of those philosophers is certainly diminished when a fair lady has gone as far in quest of knowledge. You have gone in an age when travels are brought to a juster standard, by narrations being limited to truth.

Formerly, the performers of the longest voyages destroyed half the merit of their expeditions by relating, not what they had, but had *not* seen; a sort of communication that they might have imparted without stirring a foot from home. Such exaggerations drew discredit on travels, till people would not believe that there existed in other countries anything very different from what they saw in their own; and because no Patagonians, or gentry seven or eight feet high, were really discovered, they would not believe that there were Laplanders or pigmies of three and four. Incredulity went so far, that at last it was doubted whether China so much as existed; and our countryman Sir John Maudeville got an ill name, because, though he gave an account of it, he had not brought back its right name: at least, if I do not mistake, this was the case; but it is long since I read anything about the matter, and I am willing to begin my travels again under your Ladyship's auspices.

I am sorry to hear, Madam, that by your account Lady Mary Wortley was not so accurate and faithful as modern travellers. The invaluable art of inoculation, which she brought from Constantinople, so dear to all admirers of beauty, and to which we owe, perhaps, the preservation of yours, stamps her an universal benefactress; and as you rival her in poetic talents, I had rather you would employ them to celebrate her for her nostrum, than detect her for romancing. However, genuine accounts of the interior of seraglios would be precious; and I was in hopes would become the greater rarities, as I flattered myself that your friends the Empress of Russia and the Emperor were determined to level Ottoman tyranny. His Imperial Majesty, who has demolished the prison bars of so many nunneries, would perform a still more Christian act in setting free so many useless sultanas; and her

Czarish Majesty, I trust, would be as great a benefactress to our sex by abolishing the barbarous practice that reduces us to be of none. Your Ladyship's indefatigable peregrinations should have such great objects in view, when you have the ear of sovereigns.

Peter the Hermit conjured up the first crusadoes against the infidels by running about from monarch to monarch. Lady Craven should be as zealous and as renowned; and every fair Circassian would acknowledge, that one English lady had repaid their country for the secret which another had given to Europe from their practice.

2411. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 9, 1787

THE post is come in so late (past three) and I am forced to dine so early, Madam, that I could say but a few words, were I able; but I have been out, leaving my name, by way of airing, at doors of how d'yes, and it tired me so much, that I was forced to leave half upon my conscience and come home to rest till another day. However, I am recovered of my gout, have been abroad three evenings, and wish myself much joy of far the shortest fit I have had these twenty years (only for a fortnight), so that if I live another century, I may hope to have worn out the mines of chalk, and to be very healthy and robust too.

I must not only thank your Ladyship for your most obliging inquiry, but for your great condescension in making unnecessary apologies. It was indeed my head was hurt at a *soupçon* of untruth, not my heart, which can only be answerable to itself; but on the verge of seventy I should be liable to the imputation of dotage if I were grown either affected or artful—what! make the undertaker laugh at me!

I am charmed with your theatre, and only wish I could be a spectator. I extremely approve your good humour in dancing and acting, for I should hate gravity, dignity, or austerity in one's own house in the country. Who had not rather see Scipio playing at leap-frog with his children at his Ampthill, than parading to St. Paul's to sing 'Te Deum?' Would to the Muses, too, that I were capable of being your poet epilogate! not that I would if I could, when you have the best epilogue as well as prologue-maker in the whole county of Parnassus at your elbow. How the deuce, Madam, should I fifty years ago have been able to write an epilogue worthy

of waiting on a prologue of Mr. Fitzpatrick? I am fool-hardy enough, when I send you a dab of prose, and yet I would not venture that, if it were not a curiosity, that is, almost a *true* novel; at least, I have not, as you will find, attempted to add one romantic circumstance, rather the contrary. The little French ditty, *said* to be written by an English Earl, I am sure will please you for its tender simplicity.

I have printed but forty copies, and merely for presents, which I only mention from my ambition that Lord Ossory may have a complete set of my editions; and as I have appropriated all the rest, I shall not have another copy but my own left.

I must finish for every reason, *as per above*, and am the most obedient servant of the whole *dramatis personæ*.

2412. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Jan. 21, 1787.

Your Ladyship's letter followed me hither, and I give you many thanks for complying with my suit for the epilogue, which was very proper for the occasion, simple and unaffected. In fact, those overtures and adieus are very difficult, especially when the pieces are not new; nor can I in general approve them. If a prologue, like the contents prefixed to cantos of a poem, opens the plot, it anticipates it. If it does not, why it is there? An epilogue is essentially as useless: will people have liked a play, if they have not liked it? though the poet begs they will have done so, or thanks them though they have not. Dryden talked politics or controversy, or of anything passing in town, in *his* prefaces and postfaces. Addison and classic authors talked of Sophocles and Euripides, in their prologues and in their epilogues, as if the whole audience were to sup at the Rose Tavern. Garrick's essays were like medley overtures, drew characters of different classes, which diverted the pit and galleries, answered his purpose, showed his mimicry, and will not do without it.

In short, prologues seem never to have been necessary but to Shakspeare, whose Plays, often comprehending half a century and half Europe, it was impossible for the spectators to conceive at once, from the mere shifting of the decoration (or from not shifting it, as was a little the case in his time), that the actors were one moment in the street at Venice, and the next in a bedchamber in Cyprus. But I did not mean to write a dissertation, and shall leave the

practice to the will of the world, to be continued or omitted as it pleases; which I believe is the wisest way in most things, when one's opinion does not sail with the current. I dip so little in that tide, that I did not know of Mr. Crawfurd's new passion: I have seen him but once these six weeks.

Lord Waldegrave has taken, for six months, the ready-furnished house in Dover-street, over against Lord Ashburnham's, which is very agreeable to me, as being so near me. I saw them on the eve of the birthday.

Lord Carmarthen's dinner answered the expectation of nobody; except Mr. Fox, General Conway, and Lord Macartney, I think there was nobody but foreign ministers. Though his list of invitations was as promiscuous as the company that Noah carried into the Ark, the pairs were not quite so well sorted. The Marquis and Earl of Buckingham would not have been a very loving couple. In truth, I thought the whole congregation, had it met, would have been so distressed and awkward, that it would have been like a dinner that the late Duke of Montagu[1] made at Bath, of all the people he could find there that stuttered. The three that did go, were the fittest in the world for a heterogeneous mixture: Mr. Fox and Lord Macartney are easy with anybody; and Mr. Conway never knows with whom he is, nor perceives there is anything political or uncouth amongst any set of people. He had forgotten the dinner the next day, till I asked him about it.

Are not you sorry, Madam, that the King of Prussia's bigamy is not true? It diverted me exceedingly; it would have been quite new to have three queens at once—one that is not his wife, one that is, and one that cannot be. I fear, too, that the Prince of Anhalt is not so complete a courtier as was reported; it was said that, in compliment to his sovereign, he had doubled his matrimony too. Kings should strike novel strokes: *they* can give a fillip to the world, and turn it out of its old humdrum ways. Nobody minds individuals; the Duchess of Kingston and Mr. Madan aimed in vain at introducing polygamy; but when Solomon countenanced it, the Queen of Sheba went to admire his wisdom; and I dare to say at her return had as many husbands as his Hebrew majesty had wives; she never went so far on mere speculation.

[1] The eccentric quart-bottle Duke.—CUNNINGHAM.

2413. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 1, 1787.

THOUGH you announced Lord Ossory, Madam, I did not expect to see him so soon as the next day, when he was so good as to call on me. His appearance prevented my immediate reply, as he can now shoot news flying, and I only gather up a few scattered feathers; and at present have not picked up one *pen* feather, nor should write but to explain the ballad you wot of, and which I never saw in its own person, though I know its birth and parentage, ay, its father and mother.

It was written by the late Lord Melcombe, on a Mrs. Strawbridge, whom I knew, and who was still a very handsome black woman; she lived at the corner house going to Saville Row, over against the late Duke of Grafton's. The Lord, then Mr. Dodington, fancied himself in love with her, and one day obtained an assignation. He found her lying on a couch. But, whether he had not expected so kind a reception, or was not so impatient to precipitate the conclusion of the romance, he kneeled down, and seizing her hand, cried, "Oh, that I had you but in a wood!"—"In a wood," cried the astonished Statira; "what would you do? rob me?" However, then, or afterwards, that interlude produced an arrangement, and he gave her a bond of ten thousand pounds to be paid if he married any body else. He did marry Mrs. Behan,[2] with whom he could not own his marriage till Mrs. Strawbridge died.

As I cannot precisely ascertain the date of the ballad, I am not sure that *Mrs. Masham* was the famous *Lady Masham*, though perhaps it was, as, by the mention of the Kit-Kats, it was probably written in Queen Anne's time, when her Majesty's favour might have stamped that gentlewoman for a beauty. *The little Whig* was most certainly the beautiful Lady Sunderland,[3] the Duke of Marl-

[1] See vol. i. p. 216, vol. ii. p. 450, and vol. iii. p. 54.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] See vol. i. p. 216.—CUNNINGHAM.

[3] Anne Churchill, Countess of Sunderland, second daughter of the great Duke of Marlborough. She died 15th April, 1716. In the obituary notice of her death in 'The Political State' for 1716, she is described as "the general toast by the name of The Little Whig." "Of this theatre [the Haymarket] I saw the first stone laid, on which was inscribed, 'The Little Whig,' in honour to a lady of extraordinary beauty, then the celebrated toast and pride of that party." *Colley Cibber's Apology*, 8vo, p. 257. See vol. i. p. CXXXIX.—CUNNINGHAM.

borough's daughter. There never was but one Duchess of Shrewsbury, the Italian, mentioned in Lady Mary Wortley's first pastoral;[1] and there never was a Duke of Beaufort that made it worth knowing which Duke it was. Who the witty Sir Harry was, it is impossible to guess now: it might be the wittiest Sir Harry then alive, or the foolishest—for the expression rather seems ironic.

The pamphlet I have read, Madam; but cannot tell you what would have been my opinion of it, because my opinion was influenced before I saw it. A lady-politician ordered me to read it and to admire it, as the *chef-d'œuvre* of truth, eloquence, wit, argument, and impartiality; and she assured me that the *reasonings* in it were unanswerable. I believe she meant the *assertions*, for I know she uses those words as synonymous. I promised to obey her, as I am sure that ladies understand politics better than I do, and I hold it as a rule of faith—

> That all that they admire is sweet,
> And all is sense that they repeat.

How much ready wit they have! I can give you an instance, Madam, that I heard last night. After the late execution of the *eighteen* malefactors, a female was hawking an account of them, but called them *nineteen*. A gentleman said to her, "Why do you say *nineteen?* there were but *eighteen* hanged. She replied, "Sir, I did not know *you* had been reprieved."

The letters of Henry VI.'s reign, &c., are come out, and *to me* make all other letters not worth reading. I have gone through above one volume, and cannot bear to be writing when I am so eager to be reading. There is one of *Sir John Falstaff*, in which he leaves his enemies to *White Beard* or *Black Beard*, that is, says he, to God or the Devil.

There are letters from *all* my acquaintance, Lord Rivers, Lord Hastings, the Earl of Warwick, whom I remember still better than Mrs. Strawbridge, though she died within these fifty years. What antiquary would be answering a letter from a living Countess, when he may read one from Eleanor Mowbray, Duchess of Norfolk!

[1] Coquetilla in 'Roxana or the Drawing Room.'—CUNNINGHAM.

2414. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 9, 1787.

Though I sigh for your Ladyship's coming to town, I do not know whether I shall not be a loser, for what news don't you send me? That Lord Salisbury is a poet is nothing to your intelligence that *I* am going to turn player; nay, perhaps I should, if I were not too young for the company!—You tell me, too, that I snub and sneer; I protest, I thought I was the snubee.

For 'The Way to Keep Him'[1] I did not imagine it would come to anything, and so it has proved. However, I was enjoined secrecy, and, though I knew it could not remain a secret, I did not choose to be the reporter: I should have been a very premature one, for the *dramatis personæ* were not filled by two or three; one of the principal actresses has already declined—and there is an end of it.

For sneering, Lord help me! I was as guiltless. Every day I meet with red-hot politicians in petticoats, and told your Ladyship how I had been schooled by one of them, and how docile I was. If you yourself have any zeal for making converts, I should be very ready to be a proselyte, if I could get anything by it. It is very creditable, honourable, and fashionable; but, alas! I am so insignificant that I fear nobody would buy me; and one should look sillily to put one's self up to sale and not find a purchaser.

In short, I doubt I shall never make my fortune by turning courtier or comedian; and therefore I may as well adhere to my old principles, as I have always done, since you yourself, Madam, would not be flattered in a convert that nobody would take off your hands. If you could bring over Mr. Sheridan, he would do something: he talked for five hours and a half on Wednesday, and turned everybody's head. One heard everybody in the streets raving on the wonders of that speech; for my part, I cannot believe it was so supernatural as they say—do you believe it was, Madam? I will go to my oracle, who told me of the marvels of the pamphlet, which assures us that Mr. Hastings is a prodigy of virtue and abilities; and, as you think so too, how should such a fellow as Sheridan, who has no diamonds to bestow, fascinate

[1] A comedy by Arthur Murphy.—Cunningham.

all the world?—Yet witchcraft, no doubt, there has been, for when did simple eloquence ever convince a majority? Mr. Pitt and 174 other persons found Mr. Hastings guilty last night, and only sixty-eight remained thinking with *the pamphlet* and your Ladyship, that he is as white as snow. Well, at least there is a new crime, sorcery, to charge on the Opposition! and, till they are cleared of that charge, I will never say a word in their favour nor think on politics more, which I would not have mentioned but in answer to your Ladyship's questions; and therefore I hope we shall drop the subject and meet soon in Grosvenor-place in a perfect neutrality of good humour.

2415. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

DEAR MADAM, *Berkeley Square, Feb.* 23, 1787.

I NOT only send you 'La Cité des Dames,' but Christina's 'Life of Charles the Fifth,' which will entertain you more; and which, when I wrote my brief history of her, I did not know she had actually composed. Mr. Dutens told me of it very lately, and actually borrowed it for me; and but yesterday my French bookseller sent me three-and-twenty other volumes of those 'Mémoires Historiques'[1] which I had ordered him to get for me, and which will keep my eyes to the oar for some time, whenever I have leisure to sail through such an ocean; and yet I shall embark with pleasure, late as it is for me to undertake such a hugeous voyage: but a crew of old gossips are no improper company, and we shall sit in a warm cabin, and hear and tell old stories of past times.

Pray keep the volume as long as you please, and borrow as many more as you please, for each volume is a detached piece. Yet I do not suppose your friends will allow you much time for reading in town; and I hope I shall often be the better for their hindering you.[2] Yours most sincerely and most cordially.

[1] 'Collection des meilleurs Ouvrages Français composés par des Femmes;' by Mademoiselle Keralio.—BERRY.

[2] Miss More, in a letter written a few days after, says—"Mr. Walpole is remarkably well: yesterday he sent me a very agreeable letter, with some very thick volumes of curious French Mémoires, desiring me, if I like them, to send for the other twenty-three volumes; a pretty light undertaking, in this mad town and this short life." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 49.—WRIGHT.

2416. TO THE REV. HENRY ZOUCH.

Berkeley Square, March 18, 1787.

It is very true, Sir, as Lord Strafford told you, that I have taken care that letters of living persons to me shall be restored to the writers when I die. I have burnt a great many, and, as you desire it, would do so by yours; but, having received a like intimation some time ago, I put yours into a separate paper, with a particular direction that they should be delivered to you; and, therefore, I imagine it will be more satisfaction to you, as it will be to me too, that you should receive them yourself; and therefore, if you please to let me know how I shall convey them, I will bring them from Strawberry Hill, where they are, the first time I go thither. I hope you enjoy your health, and I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.

2417. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, June 14, 1787.

Though your Ladyship *gave me law* (a very proper synonyme for delay), I should have answered your letter incontinently, but I have had what is called a *blight* in one of my eyes, and for some days was forced to lie fallow, neither reading nor writing a line; which is a little uncomfortable when quite alone. I do begin to creep about my house, but have not recovered my feet enough to compass the whole circuit of my garden. Monday last was pleasant, and Tuesday very warm; but we are relapsed into our east-windhood, which has reigned ever since I have been here for this *green winter*, which, I presume, is the highest title due to this season, which in southern climes is positive *summer*, a name imported by our travellers, with grapes, peaches, and tuberoses; but, as we cannot build hothouses for our whole latitude, our summers seldom come to maturity. However, most of my senses have enjoyed themselves—my sight with verdure, my smell by millions of honeysuckles, my hearing by nightingales, and my feeling with good fires: tolerable luxury for an old cavalier in the north of Europe! Semiramis of Russia is not of my taste, or she would not travel half round the arctic circle; unless she means to conquer the Turks, and transfer

the seat of her empire to Constantinople, like its founder. The ghost of Irene will be mighty glad to see her there, though a little surprised that the Grand Duke, her son, is still alive. I hear she has carried her grandchildren with her as hostages, or she might be dethroned, and not hear of it for three months.

The Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch, they say, came through Holland, and going to visit a chief burgher, found cannon planted before his door, and did not stay to leave a card. How Lord George Gordon must long to be there and burn a street or two!

Most of Mr. Cunningham's anecdotes, to be sure, are not new at present, Madam, but they would have been so twenty years ago, and at least confirm much of what has come out recently. Some, I doubt, have been castrated; indeed, I have heard so—nay, am sure; for in one paragraph a siege or town is mentioned, and refers to the preceding paragraph, in which not a syllable of it is said: clumsy enough.

I am very far from tired, Madam, of encomiums on the performance at Richmond House, but I, by no means, agree with the criticism on it that you quote, and which, I conclude, was written by some player, from envy. Who should act genteel comedy perfectly, but people of fashion that have sense? Actors and actresses can only guess at the tone of high life, and can*not* be inspired with it. Why are there so few genteel comedies, but because most comedies are written by men not of that sphere? Etherege, Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Cibber wrote genteel comedy, because they lived in the best company; and Mrs. Oldfield played it so well, because she not only followed, but often set, the fashion. General Burgoyne has written the best modern comedy, for the same reason; and Miss Farren is as excellent as Mrs. Oldfield, because she has lived with the best style of men in England: whereas Mrs. Abington can never go beyond *Lady Teazle*, which is a second-rate character, and that rank of women are always aping women of fashion, without arriving at the style.[1] Farquhar's plays talk the language of a marching regiment in country quarters; Wycherley, Dryden, Mrs. Centlivre, &c., wrote as if they had only lived in the 'Rose Tavern;'[2] but then the Court lived in Drury-lane, too, and Lady Dorchester and Nell Gwyn were equally good company. The

[1] "Mrs. Abington should never go out of the line of the affected fine lady; in that she succeeds, because it is not unnatural to her." *Lady G. Spencer to Lord Harcourt, 17th May*, 1783. (*MS*)—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] A celebrated tavern adjoining Drury Lane Theatre.—CUNNINGHAM.

Richmond Theatre, I imagine, will take root. I supped with the Duke at Mrs. Damer's, the night before I left London, and they were talking of improvements on *the local*, as the French would say.

A propos, Mrs. Damer has given me her Eagle, which I call *the spoilt child* of my antique one, it is in such a passion. I hope your Ladyship will approve of the motto I design for it. Do you remember the statue at Milan, with this legend:—

Non me Praxiteles, sed Marcus finxit Agrati!

Mine is to be this pentameter:—

Non me Praxiteles finxit, at Anna Damer.

I left Lady Waldegrave in town, not quite well, though I never saw her better than when she arrived; and her complaints, I believe, are merely the consequence of her situation. I asked her little girl whether she had a Waldegrave or a Walpole temper, but in more intelligible phrase to her a gentle or a violent one? She replied, "A middling one."

Friday night, 15*th*.

To-day has contradicted all I wrote last night. The Cadogans and Churchills have dined with me, and the south wind came to meet them, and we drank tea out of doors, and sat there till half an hour after eight, Strawberry never looking in greater beauty. Mr. Previs, the Jew, came with them, of whom Lord Cadogan is as fond as the Prince. Lord Hertford is to give his Royal Highness a ball on Monday, to which I am asked; but I have sent my excuse, as dancing and the next reign are not in unison with seventy and limping. Lady Pembroke is to bring the Princess Lubomirski hither to-morrow to breakfast, which I cannot avoid; but I will not begin the chapter of grievances on the people that come to see my house. I should be as tiresome to your Ladyship, as they are to me; yet you do deserve a little chastisement. What a string of lofty words have you applied to a poor old creature who never was entitled to one of them! Honour! value! admiration!—for what? of what?—mercy on me! I look into my heart, I look into my head, and find nothing in either that does not make me blush, and reject, thoroughly mortified, such unmerited compliments. Honour and value Mr. Howard, Madam; admire Mr. Sheridan; but scatter

no flowers on a skeleton who is hasting to the land of oblivion, and may be well content if his faults accompany him thither!

2418. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, June 15, 1787.

In your note, on going out of town, you desired me to remember you; but as I do not like the mere servile merit of obedience, I took time, my dear Madam, to try to forget you; and, having failed as to my wish, I have the free-born pleasure of thinking of you in spite of my teeth, and without any regard to your injunction. No queen upon earth, as fond as royal persons are of their prerogative, but would prefer being loved for herself rather than for her power; and I hope you have not more majesty

Than the whole race of queens.

Perhaps the spirit of your command did not mean that I should give you such manual proof of my remembrance; and you may not know what to make of a subject who avows a mutinous spirit, and at the same time exceeds the measure of his duty. It is, I own, a kind of Irish loyalty; and, to keep up the Irish character, I will confess that I never was disposed to be so loyal to any sovereign that was not a subject.

If you collect from all this galamatias that I am cordially your humble servant, I shall be content. The Irish have the best hearts in the three kingdoms, and they never blunder more than when they attempt to express their zeal and affection: the reason, I suppose, is, that cool sense never thinks of attempting impossibilities; but a warm heart feels itself ready to do more than is possible for those it loves. I am sure our poor friend in Clarges-street[1] [Mrs. Vesey] would subscribe to this last sentence. What English heart ever excelled hers? I should almost have said equalled, if I were not writing to one that rivals her.

[1] In a letter to Walpole, written at this time from Cowslip Green, Miss More says —"When I sit in a little hermitage I have built in my garden,—not to be melancholy in, but to think upon my friends, and to read their works and letters,—Mr. Walpole seldomer presents himself to my mind as the man of wit than as the tender-hearted and humane friend of my dear infirm, broken-spirited Mrs. Vesey. One only admires talents, and admiration is a cold sentiment, with which affection has commonly nothing to do: but one does more than admire them when they are devoted to such gentle purposes. My very heart is softened when I consider that she is now out of the way of your kind attentions, and I fear that nothing else on earth gives her the smallest pleasure." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 72.—Wright.

The last time I saw her before I left London, Miss Burney passed the evening there, looking quite recovered and well, and so cheerful and agreeable, that the Court seems only to have improved the ease of her manner, instead of stamping more reserve on it, as I feared: but what slight graces it can give, will not compensate to us and the world for the loss of her company and her writings. Not but that *some young ladies* who can write, can stifle their talent as much as if they were under lock and key in the royal library. I do not see but *a cottage* is as pernicious to genius as the Queen's waiting-room. Why should one *remember* people that forget themselves? Oh! I am sorry I used that expression, as it is commonly applied to such self-oblivion as Mrs. ——; and light and darkness are not more opposite than the forgetfulness to which I alluded, and hers. The former forgetfulness can forget its own powers and the injuries of others; the latter can forget its own defects, and the obligations and services it has received. How poor is that language which has not distinct terms for modesty and virtue, and for excess of vanity and ingratitude! The Arabic tongue, I suppose, has specific words for all the shades of oblivion, which, you see, has its extremes. I think I have heard that there are some score of different terms for a lion in Arabic, each expressive of a different quality; and consequently its generosity and its appetite for blood are not confounded in one general word. But if an Arabian vocabulary were as numerous in proportion for all the qualities that can enter into a human composition, it would be more difficult to be learned therein, than to master all the characters of the Chinese.

You did me the honour of asking me for my 'Castle of Otranto,' for your library at Cowslip Green. May I, as a printer, rather than as an author, beg leave to furnish part of a shelf there? and as I must fetch some of the books from Strawberry Hill, will you wait till I can send them all together? And will you be so good as to tell me whither I shall send them, or how direct and convey them to you at Bristol? I shall have a satisfaction in thinking that they will remain in your rising cottage (in which, I hope, you will enjoy a long series of happy hours); and that they will sometimes, when they and I shall be forgotten in other places, recall to Miss More's memory her very sincere humble servant.

2419. TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, June 17, 1787.

I HAVE very little to tell you since we met but disappointments, and those of no great consequence. On Friday night Lady Pembroke wrote to me that Princess Lubomirski was to dine with her the next day, and desired to come in the morning to see Strawberry. Well, my castle put on its robes, breakfast was prepared, and I shoved another company out of the house, who had a ticket for seeing it. The sun shone, my hay was cocked, we looked divinely; and at half an hour after two, nobody came but a servant from Lady Pembroke, to say her Polish altitude had sent her word she had another engagement in town that would keep her too late. So Lady Pembroke's dinner was addled; and we had nothing to do, but, like good Christians, if we chose it, to compel everybody on the road, whether they chose it or not, to come in and eat our soup and biscuits. Methinks this *liberum veto* was rather impertinent, and I begin to think that the partition of Poland was very right.

Your brother has sent me a card for a ball on Monday, but I have excused myself. I have not yet compassed the whole circuit of my own garden, and I have had an inflammation in one of my eyes, and don't think I look as well as my house and my verdure; and had rather see my hay-cocks, than the Duchess of Polignac and Madame Lubomirski. 'The Way to keep Him'[1] had the way to get me, and I could crawl to it, because I had an inclination; but I have a great command of myself when I have no mind to do anything. Lady Constant was worth an hundred *acs* and *irskis*. Let me hear of you when you have nothing else to do; though I suppose you have as little to tell as you see I had.

2420. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, June 28, 1787.

I BEG your Ladyship to forgive my asking you what will sound like an impertinent question: it is, whether you received an answer from me dated the 16th, to one I had the honour of receiving from

[1] The first comedy represented at the theatre in Richmond House. [Whitehall.]—WALPOLE.

you a day or two before? My reason for asking it is, that a letter I wrote on business by the same post did actually miscarry, and has given me some trouble. We have no posthouse at Twickenham, but a boy from Isleworth fetches them, and I suppose sometimes twists them to the tail of a paper-kite. If he made that use of my last to your Ladyship, perhaps you will have thought that as you gave me holidays, and told me I need not write soon, I have been flying a kite too; but my second childhood does not enable me to gambol; and if it did, you are one of the last persons from whom I would play truant.

I have been sending some layers of clove-carnations to Lady Ravensworth, for which Lady Euston wrote to me. I had not so many as I wished, the severe weather of last year having killed most of mine; and my gardener is so bad, that he does not restock me soon. I offered him an annuity some years ago, if he would leave me; but he desired to be excused, as it was not so good as his place, and he knew nobody else would take him; so I have been forced to keep him, because nobody else will.

As this is only a codicil to the letter I doubt you never received, Madam, it shall not be longer.

2421. TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, July 28, 1787.

Saint Swithin is no friend to correspondence, my dear Lord. There is not only a great sameness in his own proceedings, but he makes everybody else dull—I mean in the country, where one frets at its raining every day and all day. In town he is no more minded than the proclamation against vice and immorality. Still, though he has all the honours of the quarantine, I believe it often rained for forty days long before St. Swithin was born, if ever born he was; and the proverb was coined and put under his patronage, because people observed that it frequently does rain for forty days together at this season. I remember Lady Suffolk telling me, that Lord Dysart's great meadow [at Ham] had never been mowed but once in forty years without rain. I said, "All that that proved was, that rain was good for hay," as I am persuaded the climate of a country and its productions are suited to each other. Nay, rain is good for haymakers too, who get more employment the oftener the hay is made over again. I do not know who is the saint that presides over

thunder; but he has made an unusual quantity in this chill summer, and done a great deal of serious mischief, though not a fiftieth part of what Lord George Gordon did seven years ago, and happily he is fled.

Our little part of the world has been quiet as usual. The Duke of Queensberry has given a sumptuous dinner to the Princesse de Lamballe[1]—*et voilà tout.* I never saw her, not even in France. I have no particular *penchant* for sterling princes and princesses, much less for those of French plate.

The only entertaining thing I can tell your Lordship from our district is, that old Madam French,[2] who lives close by the bridge at Hampton Court, where, between her and the Thames, she has nothing but one grass-plot of the width of her house, has paved that whole plot with black and white marble in diamonds, exactly like the floor of a church; and this curious metamorphosis of a garden into a pavement has cost her three hundred and forty pounds:—a tarpaulin she might have had for some shillings, which would have looked as well, and might easily have been removed. To be sure, this exploit, and Lord Dudley's obelisk *below* a hedge, with his canal at right angles with the Thames, and a sham bridge no broader than that of a violin, and *parallel* to the river,[3] are not preferable to the monsters in clipt yews of our ancestors;

Bad taste expellas furcâ, tamen usque recurret.

On the contrary, Mrs. Walsingham is making her house at Ditton (now baptized Boyle Farm) very orthodox. Her daughter Miss Boyle,[4] who has real genius, has carved three tablets in marble with boys, designed by herself. Those sculptures are for a chimney-piece; and she is painting panels in grotesque for the library, with pilasters of glass in black and gold. Miss Crewe, who has taste too, has decorated a room for her mother's house at Richmond, which was

[1] Sister to the Prince de Carignan, of the royal house of Sardinia, and wife of the Prince de Lamballe, only son to the Duc de Penthièvre. She was sur-intendante de la maison de la Reine, and, from her attachment to Marie Antoinette, was one of the first females who fell a victim to the fury of the French revolution. The peculiar circumstances of horror which attended her death, and the indignities offered to her remains, are in the memory of every one who has read the accounts of that heart-rending event.—WRIGHT.

[2] See note at p. 277.—CUNNINGHAM.

[3] All these circumstances actually existed till within these five years at the villa of the late Viscount Dudley and Ward at Teddington.—WALPOLE.

[4] Since married to Lord Henry Fitzgerald.—WALPOLE. Boyle Farm was celebrated in 1827 for a very gorgeous fête given by five young men of fashion, one of whom was Miss Boyle's son. *Croker.* (*MS.*) It is now (1858) the seat of Lord St. Leonards.—CUNNINGHAM.

Lady Margaret Compton's, in a very pretty manner. How much more amiable the old women of the next age will be, than most of those we remember, who used to tumble at once from gallantry to devout scandal and cards! and revenge on the young of their own sex the desertion of ours. Now they are ingenious, they will not want amusement. Adieu, my dear Lord!

2422. TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.[1]

DEAR SIR, *Strawberry Hill, Aug.* 29, 1787.

SOME time ago you said you would be so kind as to give me a list of the writings of Lord Elibank. I have a mind to complete my account of 'Royal and Noble Authors,' for which I have amassed a great number of additions, both of works and omitted writers. I shall therefore be much obliged to you, if, without interrupting your own much more valuable writings, you can favour me with that list.

All I know of Lord Elibank's publications are the following:—

1. 'Inquiry into the Origin and Consequence of the Public Debts.'

2. 'Thoughts on Money, Circulation, and Paper Currency. Edinb. 1758.

3. A pamphlet on the Scottish Peerage, 1771. I do not know the title.

I have a very imperfect memorandum, made long ago, and which being only written with a pencil, is almost effaced, so that all that remains legible are these words, "Lord Lyttelton's Correspondents, Lord Elibank's answer to ——."

I recollect that it alluded to some remarkable anecdote; but my memory grows superannuated, and I cannot recover it. Have you any idea?

I do not even know Lord Elibank's Christian name, was it Patrick?

In 1778 I cut out of a newspaper almost a whole column, containing an account of the death and character of Patrick Lord Elibank; and as he is there described as a very aged man, I conclude it was the Lord I remember, who married the widow of Lord North and Grey, and was brother of Mr. Alexander Murray, imprisoned by the House of Commons.

[1] Now first collected.—CUNNINGHAM.

When I have the pleasure of seeing you here (which I hope will be in about a fortnight, when I shall be free from all engagements), I will, if you care to see it, trouble you with a sight of my intended supplement, to which, perhaps, you can contribute some additions, as I think you told me. I am in no haste, for I only intend to leave it behind me, and have actually put all the materials in order, except the article of Lord Elibank. I do not pretend to show you anything worthy of your curiosity, for nothing is more trifling than my writings; but I am glad to lay you under a sort of debt of communication, in which I am sure of being greatly overpaid.

I can tell you what is truly curious: I have a list (over and above those whom I shall mention, being dead) of at least thirty living authors and authoresses. Would not one think this a literary age? As perhaps you was not aware of what a mass of genius the House of Lords is possessed, I ought rather to say the peerage of the three kingdoms, and, of all, except two of the ladies (who are five), the works are in print, I will show you the catalogue; nay, you shall have a copy, if you please, lest so many illustrious names should be lost, when I, their painful chronicler, am not alive to record them. Nor is there an atom of vanity in that expression. Books of peerage are like the precious spices that embalm corpses, and preserve the dead for ages.

Adieu, dear Sir,

Yours most sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

2423. TO THE EARL OF HARCOURT.[1]

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 1, 1787.

I HAVE just received the honour of your Lordship's letter, with the enclosed apology of Lady George Anne Belle Amie, which I return, and which your Lordship charitably only calls *absurd*. You will preserve it, I hope, not merely as a *chef d'œuvre*, but as a proof that you have been enrolled in the new *Académie de belles lettres* without your knowledge.

You are pleased, my Lord, to ask my advice how to avoid that honour. I wish I knew, being condemned to the same distinction! The only probable way, I think, may be, by not answering the

[1] Now first published.—CUNNINGHAM.

letter, and then the Foundress may punish you by expulsion. I cannot promise that my nostrum will answer. I have dropped her correspondence for still *graver* reasons, and yet she heaps coals of fire on my head. Indeed I do not see how your Lordship can answer her, without resenting the freedom she takes so very improperly with Lady Harcourt.

For my part, I must submit, if she chooses to make me ridiculous. I have been so foolish as to be an author (of which I most heartily repent). It is not only exposing oneself, but giving others an opportunity to expose one; and therefore, being already one of that general set of fools, it matters little if I am ranged in any particular class. I scratched my name out of the Society of Antiquaries, and what was I the better? Lord Buchan chose me into his congregation of Wiseacres at Edinburgh!—nay, I have been called names; I have been styled in magazines *an ingenious and learned author!* now I am to be a Fellow of an Academy in Germany. I wish I do not live to be member of a Beefsteak Club in Rosemary Lane!—but these are idle distresses: it is very seriously that I am ashamed of the real honours that your Lordship has showered upon me, and of which I am so very unworthy. I wish I could command any words that would distinguish real from affected modesty; yet, when I am seventy years of age, surely I may be believed to speak truth. I have spoken too much in my life, and would not willingly, when I am dropping to earth, assume a new character. Sincerely, my Lord, I blush to come to Nuneham, to behold compliments to myself,—nay, should prefer the most palpable grimace of modesty, to impudent vanity; still I feel that it would wear the air of impertinent ingratitude, if I refused to obey your Lordship's commands.

I shall go to Park-place soon, and will thence send over to know, whether my visit would be inconvenient, and yet, if there is veracity in man, I do heartily wish the circumstances of the Frieze were effaced. I am happy that the Tapestry pleased your Lordship enough, to bestow a room on it,—but surely so trifling and cheap a present, and so inadequate to the many valuable ones I have received from your Lordship, could in no light merit an inscription! and to a name so insignificant as mine! and which will every day grow more obscure, or be remembered only by my follies, and then, depend upon it, your Lordship will wish you had taken my advice, and blotted out your Legend. Consequently, I infinitely prefer doing justice on myself, to occasioning your Lordship being reproached with mis-

placing your favour. I have the honour to be, with great respect, my Lord,

Your Lordship's
Most obedient humble servant,
HOR. WALPOLE.

2424. TO THE EARL OF HARCOURT.[1]

MY GOOD LORD, *Saturday night.*

MAY I take the liberty of asking a favour of you, provided you will refuse without the least difficulty? It is to beg a ticket for Westminster Hall on Monday next—not for myself, the Lord knows,[2] who go into no crowds, but for a young lady, for whom I am much interested. Most probably, your Lordship's tickets are all engaged, but I could not refuse to solicit for her, and I flatter myself your Lordship will excuse it, with your usual indulgence to your Lordship's

Most obedient humble servant,
HOR. WALPOLE.

2425. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 6, 1787.

I WILL not make a feigned excuse, Madam, nor catch at the pretence you kindly offer me of a lost letter; no, I confess honestly that I knew I owed you one, but was too conscientious to pay my just debts with the base currency of Richmond and Hampton Court, and I have no other specie. I know nothing, do nothing, but repeat the same insipid round that I have passed for so many summers, if summer this has been to be called. The dowagers of my canton pick up and dress up tales of what is done in London and at various watering-places; but I hold it a prudery becoming old men, (the reverse of that of old women,) not to trouble myself about or censure the frolics of the young; and for my contemporaries, so few of them are left, that unless by living to the age of Old Parr or Jenkins, we are not likely to commit anything remarkable. I have seen none of

[1] Now first published. The ticket was for Hastings's trial.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] I have written very bad English, for I have said the Lord goes into no crowds, which, though divines say so, I hope is not true. *Walpole, P.S. to Letter.*—CUNNINGHAM.

the French, Savoyard, or Lorraine princes and princesses, sterling or pinchbeck: I broke off my *commercial treaty* with France, when I was robbed of half Madame du Deffand's papers, and care no more for their *bonne compagnie*, than for their convicts Monsieur de Calonne and Madame de la Motte.

Under such a negative existence, what could I write, Madam? I have heard nothing for these two months worth telling you but this little story. There lives at Kingston a Mrs. Barnard, a very wealthy hen-Quaker. She has a passion for beautiful black and white cows, never parts with a pretty calf, and consequently has now a hecatomb as striped and spotted as leopards and tigers. The Queen happened to see this ermined drove, and being struck with the beauty of their robes, sent a page to desire to purchase one. Mrs. Barnard replied, she never sold cows, but would lend her Majesty her bull with all her heart. *A propos* to Court, it is not a recent story, I believe, but did you ever hear, Madam, that Mrs. Herbert, the bed-chamber-woman, going in a hackney-chair, the chairmen were excessively drunk, and after tossing and jolting her for some minutes, set the chair down; and the foreman, lifting up the top, said, "Madam, you are so drunk, that if you do not sit still, it will be impossible to carry you."

To prove how little I had to say, I will empty my bi-mensial memory with the only other scrap I have collected, and which I may send in part of payment for the four lines of *Latin* of Archbishop Tenison, which I have received from your Ladyship. Mine is an ancient Latin saw, which proves that the famous Bulse was a legal escheat to the Crown. In the new volume of the 'Archæologia' is an essay on the state of the Jews in England in former times; and there it is said, "*Judæus verò nihil possidere potest, quia quicquid acquirit, acquirit regi.*" I suppose nobody will dispute Mr. Hastings being a Jew; or, if you please, for *Judæus* you may read *Indicus*, so like are the words and the essence.

Many thanks for the advertisement, which is curious indeed! I have not visited Mr. Herschel's giant telescope, though so near me. In truth, the scraps I have learnt of his discoveries have confounded me: my little head will not contain the stupendous idea of an infinity of worlds; not that I at all disbelieve them, or anything that is above my comprehension. Infinite space may certainly contain whatever is put into it: and there is no reason for imagining that nothing has been put into it, but what our short-sighted eyes can see. Worlds, systems of suns and worlds may be as plenty as blackberries; but

what can such an incredibly small point as a human skull do with the possibility of Omnipotence's endless creation? Do but suppose that I was to unfold to a pismire in my garden an account of the vast empire of China—not that there is any degree of proportion in the comparison. Proceed; suppose another pismire could form a prodigious, yet invisible, spying-glass, that should give the student ant a glimpse of the continent of China. Oh! I must stop: I shall turn my own brain, which, while it is launching into an ocean of universes, is still admiring pismire Herschel. That he should not have a *wise* look, does not surprise me—he may be stupified at his own discoveries; or to make them, it might require a head constructed too simply to contain any diversity of attention to puny objects. Sir Isaac Newton, they say, was so absorbed in his pursuits, as to be something of a changeling in worldly matters; and when he descended to earth and conjecture, he was no phenomenon.

I will alight from my altitudes, and confine myself to our own anthill. Have you seen, Madam, the horrible mandate of the Emperor to General Murray? Think of that insect's threatening to sacrifice thousands of his fellow pismires to what he calls *his dignity!* the dignity of a mite, that, supposing itself as superior as an earwig, meditates preventing hosts of its own species from enjoying the happiness and the moment of existence that has been allotted to them in an innumerable succession of ages! But while scorn, contempt, and hatred kindle against the imperial insect, admiration crowds in for the brave pismires who so pathetically deprecate their doom, yet seem resigned to it! I think I never read anything more noble, more touching, than the remonstrance of the Deputies to Prince Kaunitz.

If tyrant dignity is ready to burst on Brabant, appearances with us seem also too warlike. I shall be very sorry if it arrives. I flattered myself, that in our humiliated state, the consequence of *our dignity*, we should at least be tame and tranquil for the remnant of my time; but what signifies care about moments? I will return to your letter; which set me afloat on the vasty deep of speculation, to which I am very unequal and do not love. My understanding is more on a level with your ball, and meditations on the destruction of Gorhambury,[1] which I regret. It was in a very crazy state,

[1] The "mansion house" was built by Sir Nicholas Bacon, and completed by his son the Lord Chancellor. It was pulled down (sad to write) in 1778, when the present mansion was built by Sir Robert Taylor, for Viscount Grimston, 1778-1785.—CUNNINGHAM.

but deserved to be propped; the situation is by no means delightful.

I called at Sir Joshua's, while he was at Ampthill, and saw his Hercules for Russia. I did not at all admire it: the principal babe put me in mind of what I read so often, but have not seen, *the monstrous craws*. Master Hercules's knees are as large as, I presume, the late Lady Guilford's. *Blind* Tiresias is *staring* with horror at the terrible spectacle. If Sir Joshua is satisfied with his own departed picture, it is more than the possessors or posterity will be. I think he ought to be paid in annuities only for so long as his pictures last: one should not grudge him the first-fruits.

Mr. Gibbon's three volumes I shall certainly read. I am fond of quartos: and I dare to say he has laboured these, and I shall be quite satisfied if they are equal to the first *tome*. The Long Minuet you may be sure I have, as I get everything I can of Mr. Bunbury's.

Though I have wandered into another sheet, I will not be so unconscionable as to fill more of it; and make your Ladyship repent your condescension of having awakened me. I will only ask whether you have heard that the Duchess of Kingston has adopted the eldest Meadows, paid his debts, given him 600*l.* a year, and intends to make him her heir? Methinks this is robbing Peter to pay *Peter*.

Stay, I forgot to tell you, Madam, that Miss Boyle has designed and carved in marble three medallions of boys, for a chimney-piece, at Ditton. Lady Di. has done two pictures for 'Macbeth' and 'Lear:' the latter with the madman is very fine. Now, I have finished, indeed.

2426. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 15, 1787.

Of such of my editions, Madam, as you say Lord Ossory has not, I am sure I had no doubt but I had given him all but one. The last time I was at Ampthill, I did desire his Lordship to look if he had all my publications, and told him I would, as far as I could, perfect his set, as I will now do; and I am glad to know which he wants, that I may supply him while I can.

Pray excuse me, if I say a little more on this occasion, though it will only be collaterally.

I have been long vexed at the ridiculous prices given for my editions. It could not be flattering to the vainest author or editor

upon earth; for their dearness is solely to be attributed to their scarcity; and a collector who pays extravagantly for a rare book, will never read *in* it, or allow anybody else, for the virgin purity of the margin is as sacred with him as the text.

When the 'Anecdotes of Painting' became so ridiculously dear, which happened by collectors of portraits cutting out the prints, and using the text, I suppose, for waste paper, I printed a small edition without prints, at half-a-crown a volume, that painters and artists might purchase them cheaply, and that nobody might pay dearly, unless by choice. This is all I can do to remedy a folly I did not certainly intend to occasion. Those 'Anecdotes' are the only thing I ever published of any use; and if I reprinted my other trumpery, nobody would buy them; and I cannot afford to put myself to great expense to save the money of foolish virtuosos.

I am sorry, too, on many accounts, that this idle list has been printed; but I have several reasons for lamenting daily that I ever was either author or editor. Your Ladyship has often suspected me to continue being the former, against which I have solemnly protested, nor except the little dab on Christina of Pisan (on which I shall tell you one of my regrets) I have not written six pages on any one subject for some years. No, Madam, I have lived to attain a little more sense; and were I to recommence my life, and thought as I do now, I do not believe that any consideration could induce me to be an author. I wish to be forgotten; and though that will be my lot, it will not be so, so soon as I wish.—In short (and it is pride, not humility, that is the source of my present sentiments), I have great contempt for middling writers. We have not only betrayed want of genius, but want of judgment. How can one of my groveling class open a page of a standard author, and not blush at his own stuff? I took up 'The First Part of Henry IV.' t'other day, and was ready to set fire to my own printing-house, "*Unimitable, unimitated Falstaff!*" cried Johnson, in a fit of just enthusiasm; and yet, amongst all his repentances, I do not find that Johnson repented of having written his own 'Irene.'

Well! I should grow tedious on this subject, Madam, if I gave a loose to my own reflections on that ground—I will only add two circumstances. Not designing to add 'Christina,' as I found Lord Salisbury was *not* a Noble Author, I printed only forty copies. For this I have been abused and called *illiberal*, for not letting all the possessors of my 'Noble Authors' have that scrap. Nay, a Mr. Ireland,[1]

[1] The father of *Shakespeare* Ireland.—CUNNINGHAM.

a collector (I believe with interested views), bribed my engraver to sell him a print of the frontispiece, has etched it himself, and I have heard, has reprinted the piece—and I suppose will sell some copies as part of the forty. I could tell you twenty of these foolish grievances; one of which leads to my second circumstance.

In the list for which Lord Ossory asks, is the Description of this place; now, though printed, I have entirely kept it up, and mean to do so while I live, for very sound reasons, Madam, as you will allow. I am so tormented by visitors to my house, that two or three rooms are not shown, to abridge their stay. In the Description are specified all the enamels and miniatures, &c., which I keep under lock and key. If the visitors got the book into their hands, I should never get them out of the house, and they would want to see fifty articles which I do not choose they should handle and paw. The mention of the Description came out by two accidents. I gave an imperfect account of my collection to an old Mr. Cole, a clergyman of Cambridge, many years ago, and on his death it was sold to a bookseller. It set some gossiping virtuosos on inquiry: Mr. Gulston bribed my engravers to sell him some of my prints; Mr. Gough, without asking my leave, published a list of ten of those engravings in his 'Topography,' and has occasioned my being teazed for specimens, which I have refused. The list of my editions was procured by some of these *liberal* artifices—and yet is not complete —yet I am sure I have said enough, Madam, to convince you how much cause I have to regret having exposed myself to the paltry fame that belongs to an Aldus or an Elzevir, without having deserved myself to be printed by either of them!

To others these calamities must sound comic, and I own I am happy not to have more ponderous: but it is the consequence of living much alone: one must grow occupied by one's own trifling aches, when vacant of graver matter. The worst is, that solitary people are apt to grow peevish: I hope I am not so—indeed, on stating my mishaps, I see how insignificant they are, and laugh at them. I hope, Madam, you will do so too, and at me, if you please.

So little do I remember what I write, that I cannot for my life recollect what I said in my last, to which your Ladyship replies, *that Lord Ossory thinks Hercules will fail.* If you trouble yourself to explain, tell me if you know a conundrum I heard t'other day; *Why is a bad wife better than a good one?*—the solution is good, though not very civil to Eves. Oh! it has just started into my head that Hercules is Sir Joshua's; I doubt my poor memory

begins to peel off; it is not the first crack I have perceived in it. My brother, Sir Edward, made the same complaint to me before he died, and I suggested a comfort to him, that does not satisfy myself. I told him the memory is like a cabinet, the drawers of which can hold no more than they can. Fill them with papers; if you add more, you must shove out some of the former. Just so with the memory: there is scarce a day in our lives that something, serious or silly, does not place itself there, and, consequently, the older we grow, the more must be displaced to make room for new contents. "Oh!" said my brother, "but how do you account for most early objects remaining?"—why, the drawers are lined with gummed taffety. The first ingredients stick; those piled higgledy-piggledy upon them, are tossed out without difficulty, as new are stuffed in; yet I am come to think that mice and time may gnaw holes in the sides, and nibble the papers too.

2427. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Oct. 4, 1787.

Nay, Madam, I know not how to steer between Mistress Scylla, impudent vanity, and Madam Charybdis, affected modesty. You reprove me for being decently humble, and then tell me you show my letters to Mr. Fitzpatrick. Do you think I can like that? and can I help suspecting that you are laughing at me for a credulous old simpleton? Indeed I do suspect so, and am not such a gudgeon as to swallow the hook with which you keep me in play. Mr. Fitzpatrick has too much sense and taste to be amused with the gossiping babble of my replies to the questions you put to me; and I can have no satisfaction in scribbling the trifles I send you, if they are to be seen, or if I am to ponder and guard them against being downright dotage—and how shall I discover that they are not so, if they are; where is the touchstone on which old age is to try its decays? It will strike seventy to-morrow, and who will be so much my friend as to tell me that it might as well strike four score? With these convictions staring me in the face, do not imagine, my good Madam, that I suppose I can entertain one of the liveliest young men in England, and who passes his time with Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, and Mr. Hare. It will not be kind in you either to show my letters, or to believe that I write them to be admired. I have long been honoured with your correspondence; I lead a most insipid life, and

when I hear from an old acquaintance, I own frankly I am glad to chat and throw off all the foolish things that have floated last on my mind, and that have served to amuse me for want of better employment. My letters are only fit to be seen by those who have no more rational diversions.

Your Ladyship asks me why Mr. Fitzpatrick's 'Dorinda' is not specified in the Catalogue of my impressions? Recollect, if you please, that I told you the list was imperfect, and not such as I avow; but I let newspapers and magazines say what they please of me without setting them right. Whoever trusts them must thank himself for being imposed on in points, indeed, so unimportant, that it matters not whether they possess truth or falsehood. This very month, a Magazine has re-published a tale which I do not remember, and of which I will swear part is false. It is that, many years ago I gave Mr. Beauclerk my Tragedy, with injunctions not to show it to Garrick or Dr. Johnson. I doubt the fact very much, but am sure the reason assigned for not communicating it to the former is absolutely false: viz., because Garrick was such a goose as to prefer 'Agis' to 'Douglas.' Goose, and goosissime he was, if he did, but I will take my death I never heard he did; nor do I believe that any one ever did, unless the author did, who was such a goose too, as to write 'Agis,' ay, and all his other plays, after having written 'Douglas.' If there is a grain of truth in the tale, it may have arisen from what I may have mentioned, and which was true, that Home, the author, showed me 'Agis' in MS., and never visited or bowed to me afterwards, because I was too sincere to commend (I think it was not 'Agis,' but) his 'Siege of Aquileia.' I doubt, too, the truth about Johnson; you know, Madam, I never reverenced him, yet had no reason to be in terrible fear of his criticisms, for he really, as far as I have heard, always spoke civilly of my publications.

For another copy of the Tragedy, your Ladyship shall have it, if you please, but not the Strawberry edition, of which I have not one left. I printed an edition, when the surreptitious one was advertised; but on advertising my own, it stopped the pinchbeck one, and so I avoided publishing it at all. Oh! these would be pretty details for the eye of Mr. Fitzpatrick: indeed, I ought to blush at sending them to Lady Ossory; but if you will converse with a printer, what can he tell you but the anecdotes of his shop?

Oct. 5.

I began this in town, where I have been for two days, to see Lady

Cadogan, who has lain in, and had not time to finish it. Neither the egg of war nor the egg of Peace is hatched yet; so, probably, the old hen of negotiation may sit on both till spring, and then the chick of the former, being true game, may burst its shell; but, in truth, I know nothing, and saving compassion for the follies and woes of mankind, care very little about the matter. I know one loves one's country, because one has done it the honour of being born in it, and one takes the religion that happens to be in waiting at the time of one's birth, for much the same wise reason; but bating those grave prejudices, I am grown tolerably indifferent about Europe's bloody noses, and cannot love and hate just as treaties cross over and figure in.

I am equally in the dark about any acting that has been at Park-place; and for the report of a match between Lady Constant and Sir Brilliant, I believe it no more than the story of St. George and the Dragon.

Monsieur Le Chauvelin's verses I think I have seen, and do like prodigiously, especially 'La Gourmandise,' 'L'Orgueil,' 'La Paresse,' 'L'Envie,' in short, all, though 'Avarice' the least.

Thus I have answered, Madam, and prosed according to custom, and will only tell you more, that I dined last Monday at Bushy (for you know I have more *penchant* for Ministers that are out than when they are in) and never saw a more interesting scene. Lord North's spirits, good humour, wit, sense, drollery, are as perfect as ever—the unremitting attention of Lady North and his children, most touching. Mr. North leads him about, Miss North sits constantly by him, carves meat, watches his every motion, scarce puts a bit into her own lips; and if one cannot help commending her, she colours with modesty and sorrow till the tears gush into her eyes. If ever loss of sight could be compensated, it is by so affectionate a family. Good-night, Madam.

2428. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

My dear Madam, *Strawberry Hill, Oct.* 14, 1787.

I am shocked for human nature at the repeated malevolence of this woman![1] [Mrs. Yearsley.] The rank soil of riches we are

[1] Walpole had recently received a letter from Miss More, in which she had said—"My old friend the milkwoman has just brought out another book, to which she has

accustomed to see overrun with seeds and thistles; but who could expect that the kindest seeds sown on poverty and dire misfortunes should meet with nothing but a rock at bottom? Catherine de' Medici, suckled by hopes and transplanted to a throne, seems more excusable. Thank Heaven, Madam, for giving you so excellent a heart; ay, and so good a head. You are not only benevolence itself, but, with fifty times the genius of a Yearsley, you are void of vanity. How strange, that vanity should expel gratitude! Does not the wretched woman owe her fame to you, as well as her affluence? I can testify your labours for both. Dame Yearsley reminds me of the Troubadours, those vagrants whom I used to admire till I knew their history; and who used to pour out trumpery verses, and flatter or abuse accordingly as they were housed and clothed, or dismissed to the next parish. Yet you did not set this person in the stocks, after procuring an annuity for her! I beg your pardon for renewing so disgusting a subject, and will never mention it again. You have better amusement; you love good works, a temper superior to revenge.

I have again seen our poor friend in Clarges-street [Mrs. Vesey]: her faculties decay rapidly, and of course she suffers less. She has not an acquaintance in town; and yet told me the town was very full, and that she had had a good deal of company. Her health is re-established, and we must now be content that her mind is not restless. My pity now feels most for Mrs. Hancock,[1] whose patience is inexhaustible, though not insensible.

Mrs. Piozzi, I hear, has two volumes of Dr. Johnson's Letters ready for publication.[2] Bruce is printing his travels; which I

prefixed my original preface to her first book, and twenty pages of the scurrility published against me in her second. To all this she has added the deed which I got drawn up by an eminent lawyer to secure her money in the funds, and which she asserts I made Mrs. Montagu sign without reading." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 80.—WRIGHT.

[1] A lady who lived with Mrs. Vesey.—BERRY. "What a blessing for Mrs. Vesey, that Mrs. Hancock is alive and well! I do venerate that woman beyond words; her faithful, quiet, patient attachment makes all showy qualities and shining talents appear little in my eyes. Such characters are what Mr. Burke calls 'the soft quiet green, on which the soul loves to rest!'" *Hannah More's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 80.—WRIGHT.

[2] In speaking of these Letters, which appeared shortly after, Hannah More says—"They are such as ought to have been written, but ought not to have been printed: a few of them are very good: sometimes he is moral, and sometimes he is kind. The imprudence of editors and executors is an additional reason why men of parts should be afraid to die. Burke said to me the other day, in allusion to the innumerable lives, anecdotes, remains, &c. of this great man, 'How many maggots have crawled out of that great body!'" *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 101.—WRIGHT.

suppose will prove that his narratives were fabulous, as he will scarce repeat them by the press. These, and two more volumes of Mr. Gibbon's 'History,' are all the literary news I know. France seems sunk indeed in all respects. What stuff are their theatrical goods, their 'Richards,' 'Ninas,' and 'Tarares'! But when their 'Figaro' could run threescore nights, how despicable must their taste be grown![1] I rejoice that their political intrigues are not more creditable. I do not dislike the French from the vulgar antipathy between neighbouring nations, but for their insolent and unfounded airs of superiority. In arms, we have almost always outshone them: and till they have excelled Newton, and come near to Shakspeare, pre-eminence in genius must remain with us. I think they are most entitled to triumph over the Italians; as, with the most meagre and inharmonious of all languages, the French have made more of that poverty in tragedy and eloquence, than the Italians have done with the language the most capable of both. But I did not mean to send you a dissertation. I hope it will not be long before you remove to Hampton.—Yet why should I wish that? You will only be geographically nearer to London till February. Cannot you, now and then, sleep at the Adelphi[2] on a visit to poor Vesey and your friends, and let one know if you do?

2429. TO THE DOWAGER LADY LYTTELTON.[3]

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 28, 1787.

It is very kind in you, my dear Madam, even to reproach me with my silence. Alas! I have no excuse to plead but one that I cannot help! I am grown so old and insipid to myself, that I never think of troubling anybody with my nullity. I know and do nothing that is

[1] Mr. Walpole had never seen Figaro acted, nor had he been at Paris for many years before it appeared: he was not, therefore, aware of the bold, witty, and continued allusions of almost every scene and of almost every incident of that comedy, to the most popular topics and the most distinguished characters of the day. The freedom with which it treated arbitrary government and all its establishments, while they all yet continued in unwelcome force in France, and the moral conduct of each individual of the piece exactly suiting the no-morality of the audience, joined to the admirable manner in which it was acted, certainly must be allowed to have given it its greatest vogue. But even now, when most of these temporary advantages no longer exist, whoever was well acquainted with the manners, habits, and anecdotes of Paris at the time of the first appearance of Figaro, will always admire in it a combination of keen and pointed satire, easy wit, and laughable incident.—Berry.

[2] At Mrs. Garrick's.—Cunningham.

[3] Now first published, from the communication of Ellis Gray Loring, Esq., of Boston, U.S.—Cunningham.

worth repeating, and therefore scarce ever write a letter. I heard with pleasure, from Lady Cecilia [Johnston], that you are well, and very much employed, which is a proof of health; and as you have been thinning your forest, I expect to see you return to town with a pair of [cheeks as] hale as a woodman's, and I shall have great pleasure [in listening] to the babel of compliments that will be made to you on y[our goo]d looks by the representatives of all the Princes in Europe at Mrs. Cosway's Diet. That, I doubt, will not be so soon as I wish; indeed, I am ignorant whether the Signora is returned from Paris—but I shall know at the end of the week, when I shall remove to Londo[n to m]eet the Court of Gloucester in London, the beginning [of the mont]h. Besides, the smoke of the capital is more congenial to my [, th]an the damp of winter, and the late deluges alarm my gout.

I know, my good Lady, you never read a newspaper till it is old enough to be incorporated into the History of England, and therefore probably do not know that we have been going to war, (no matter to you with whom,) and that we are to have peace, of which I wish you joy, as *that* does concern you, for we could not quarrel with any part of Europe without your losing some diplomatique, and they are all in succession your friends, as they are Sir Clement Cottrell's—I am not sure that he is the present introductor, or his grandson: but, like your Ladyship, I am more familiar with the images of the last reign than of the present, and we understand one another best by the old vocabulary.

You see, I hope, my dear Madam, by these old jokes, that I am rejoiced to hear from you, and answer in my ancient style. I care little for new friends and new acquaintance; they t[ake no r]oot in my veteran heart, but I am constant to those tha[t are register]ed in my first almanacs. Mr. Conway is gone to Jersey, but I tr[ust the paci]fication will bring him back incontinently, and that he will see [no fir]e but those he kindles in his own lime-kilns. The Churchills are in town, tending Mrs. Walpole, and expecting another grandbabe. This is all I know of the current century, and I fear it proves how little I had to say. Though silent or tattling, I am always equally

Your Ladyship's
Sincere old friend and servant,
HOR. WALPOLE.

[1] Post-marked, but unintelligibly, and superscribed—"To the Right Honourable the Lady Dowager Lyttelton, at the Cottage, Ripley."—CUNNINGHAM.

2430. TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Berkeley Square, Nov. 11, 1787.

From violent contrary winds,[1] and by your letter going to Strawberry Hill, whence I was come, I have but just received it, and perhaps shall only be able to answer it by snatches, being up to the chin in nephews and nieces.

I find you knew nothing of the pacification when you wrote. When I saw your letter, I hoped it would tell me you was coming back, as your island is as safe as if it was situated in the Pacific Ocean, or at least, as islands there used to be, till Sir Joseph Banks chose *to put them up*. I sent you the good news on the very day before you wrote, though I imagined you would learn it by earlier intelligence. Well! I enjoy both your safety and your great success, which is enhanced by its being owing to your character and abilities. I hope the latter will be allowed to operate by those who have not quite so much of either.

I shall be wonderful glad to see little Master Stonehenge[2] at Park-place; it will look in character there: but your own bridge is so stupendous in comparison, that hereafter the latter will be thought to have been a work of the Romans. Dr. Stukeley will burst his cerements to offer mistletoe in your temple; and Mason, on the contrary, will die of vexation and spite that he cannot have 'Caractacus' acted on the spot. "Peace to all such!"

> —— But were there one whose fires
> True genius kindles, and fair fame inspires, [*Pope.*]

he would immortalise you, for all you have been carrying on in Jersey, and for all you shall carry off. Inigo Jones, or Charlton,[3] or somebody, I forget who, called Stonehenge "Chorea Gigantum:" this will be the chorea of the pigmies; and, as I forget, too, what is Latin for Lilliputians, I will make a bad pun and say,

> ——Portantur avari
> *Pygmalionis* opes.

[1] Mr. Conway was now in Jersey.—Walpole.

[2] Mr. Walpole thus calls the small Druidic temple discovered in Jersey, which the States of that island had presented to General Conway, to be transported to and erected at Park-place.—Berry.

[3] Dr. Walter Charlton published a dissertation on Stonehenge in 1663, entitled "Chorea Gigantum." It was reprinted in 1715.—Wright.

Pygmalion is as well-sounding a name for such a monarch as Oberon. Pray do not disappoint me, but transport the cathedral[1] of your island to your domain on our *continent*. I figure unborn antiquaries making pilgrimages to visit your bridge, your daughter's bridge,[2] and the Druidic temple; and if I were not too old to have any imagination left, I would add a sequel to Mi Li.[3] Adieu!

2431. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 3, 1787.

Your Ladyship ought not to blame my silence, which you certainly occasioned yourself. Could I be such a coxcomb as to write letters on purpose that they might be shown? I have scarce ever failed to answer yours instantly, and chiefly to questions you have asked; and in that careless hurry have scribbled the first trifle or nonsense that presented itself. I should be ashamed of doing so were my letters to be shown; and more ashamed of *preparing* them for inspection,—in short, I cannot write fine letters, nor would if I could,—I am too old to care a tush for reputation; and on the other hand cannot in cold blood invite people to laugh at me. Living in a very confined circle I rarely hear news till stale; and thus disqualified for the easiest and best part of a correspondent, I was not at all unwilling to give up an employment that could entertain you so little. It was no shadow of disrespect to you, Madam, that silenced me; but just so much regard to myself as preserves me from silly vanity, and the appearance of it.

Though I received your Ladyship's letter on Saturday, and began this reply incontinently, yet I could not find a minute for finishing it; for being confined by a slight attack of gout, I can be denied to nobody and so many people came in, and their hour of dressing being so much later than mine of dining, they were so good as to bestow their vacant time on me, their idleness being of much more consequence to them than my obsolete regularity, and consequently my dinner and the post clashing, and Sunday and the post being alike incompatible, I was forced to defer this till to-day.

The return of the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester engaged me

[1] The Druidic temple.—Walpole.

[2] The key-stones of the centre arch of the bridge at Henley are ornamented with heads of the Thames and Isis, designed by the Hon. Mrs. Damer, and executed by her in Portland stone.—Berry.

[3] One of the Hieroglyphic Tales, containing a description of Park-place.—Walpole. It will be found in Walpole's Works.—Wright.

but the first two or three days, for etiquette is grown so antiquated in five years and a half, that, though the Duke does not think forms and ceremonies the least delectable part of the rubric, he is forced to relax, and they both now return visits in a morning and go to assemblies in an evening; *in* course my presence is little necessary, and I can lay myself aside as Polonius would do, though not shocked as he would be at the dereliction of good old customs. However, if Courts have lost their energy, it is made up to the world by the community of princes. Besides the goodly display at St. James's, there are half a dozen royal personages somewhere or other every night.

In France their Highnesses of Orleans and Bourbon are banished —as far as Knightsbridge and Kensington. The monarch sat from nine in the morning till five in the evening to hear philippics—and may see louis-d'ors representing him like Corniger Ammon: the Duke of Gloucester has actually brought over one of them. After such a chapter on demi-gods it would be profane to mix mortal affairs, and luckily I know nothing of this nether earth; your Ladyship's, &c.

2432. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 15, 1787.

I AM so shocked, Madam, at the account I have this instant received from your Ladyship of the fire in your house, that I must for a while postpone what relates to myself. I heartily congratulate the escapes of your persons and the preservation of your dwelling; but I do see that you have still a terrible calamity left, your suspicions, which seem too well founded. Nor can I suggest any comfort, but the hope that, as you think no discovery probable, there was no internal villany, but that it was an attempt at plunder by *outward* banditti, who had no opportunity of firing the house within. They seem to have meant to draw attention to the stables, and then to have conveyed combustibles to the top of the house, perhaps by ladders; but as I am not master exactly of the *locale*, I don't know whether my conjecture was a probable one. Indeed it is horrid to be exposed at all to such violence; yet it is much lighter than to be distracted between the dread of having execrable servants, and the horror of suspecting the innocent. I remember when General Conway's house in Warwick-street was set on fire, I was persuaded, though I did not utter a word, that his own *maître d'hotel* was the

criminal. He turned livid, looked wrapped in thought, and would scarce speak a syllable. He was a most worthy honest creature, and as the sole criminal, who was taken and confessed everything, and was executed, absolutely removed every tittle of suspicion from the *maître d'hotel*, it proved that the poor man, being necessarily interrogated, could not support the idea of a possibility of guilt lighting on him. It had been a young secretary of Richmond House, who having frequently copied papers for Mr. Conway, and had married Mrs. Damer's maid, was familiar in the house, had entered it in the evening unnoticed, and had concealed himself in a back room till five in the morning, when he broke open and robbed Mr. Conway's drawers, and then set fire to a number of letters and papers that lay on them, in the library under Mr. Conway's and Lady Aylesbury's bedchamber. I hope at least, Madam, that you will discover some such extrinsic villain.

I must particularly thank your Ladyship for recollecting your charge against me in such an hour of distress: your goodness in telling me your misfortune, and your saying you know how much I should interest myself in it, as I do most cordially, proves, I trust, that you neither really blame me, nor suspect me of becoming less attached to you than I have been for so many, many years. No, Madam, you do know, I am sure, that it is my own vanity and pride that has made me grow a less punctual correspondent. You have often heard me declare how jealous I am of growing superannuated, and how much I dread exposing myself in the dregs of life. I have not those happy spirits of some ancients, who totter on to the last, and do not find out, what everybody else does, that they are ridiculous. Why should I suppose that when every limb is decayed, my inside should remain more sound? My head never was strong enough for me to trust to its defying the buffets of seventy years; within this hour I have experienced its weakness. Lord Carmarthen called on me in the midst of my letter, and I have almost lost the post, by keeping him with telling him stories of his great-grandfather, whom I remember. I can, therefore, say nothing now of the future play at Richmond House, or of that at Ampthill; but you shall not lose a very good-humoured story of Lord North. Colonel Barré made him a visit lately: Lord North said,—"Colonel Barré, nobody will suspect us of insincerity, if we say that we should always be overjoyed to *see* each other."[1]

[1] Barré was blind of one eye, and the other was far from strong. Lord North was long blind.—CUNNINGHAM.

P.S. Pray acquaint me if you make any discovery.

Postscript to my Saturday's letter, Dec. 16, 1787.

On considering your Ladyship's account of your conflagrations more deliberately, I perceive that I mistook, and thought the *top* of the faggots had been at the top of the house. Now I conceive, or at least guess, how the event happened. I conclude some villains who knew something of your seat, but had not entrance, set fire to the stables to draw the whole attention of the family; and, that lurking at a little distance in the dark, one of them, seeing their plan succeed, and all the doors of your house left open by the servants hurrying to the stables, slipped in and set fire to the faggots, intending to plunder plate in the double confusion.

This, detestable as it was, I hope was the case.

You did not say, Madam, whether the stables were burnt down, nor what the house suffered.

The play at Richmond House is to be the 'The Wonder,' with 'The Guardian.' The new performers are Lord Henry Fitzgerald, who never played in comedy before, but is good in tragedy; a Miss Hamilton, niece of Lord Abercorn, and a Captain Merry.[1] Mrs. Hobart does not play in those pieces, but is to choose her own part in the next. In return I shall expect a detail of the theatre at Ampthill.

I have had no formal gout, but several skirmishes with it that have confined me for two or three days at a time; yet I have been once at the Opera, and was tired to death; and though I came away the moment it was ended did not get home till a quarter before twelve. The learned call the music good, but there is nothing to show the humour and action of the Storace and Morelli. I bought the book to read at home, because the Emperor paid 1000*l.* for the piece as a satire on the King of Sweden—how, the Lord knows. The plot is taken from Voltaire's deposed kings at Venice in his 'Candide,' of whom only two are introduced, King Theodore and Sultan Achmet. The words are ten times stupider than our operas generally are; nor do I yet know that the King of Sweden, to whom I am no more partial than Cæsar is, was ever deposed. In short, if it is a satire on any mortal, it is one on Cæsar himself, for having paid so dear for such unintelligible nonsense.

[1] Robert Merry, a small poet—put down, for ever, by Mr. Gifford. He died in 1798.—Cunningham.

My elderly cousin, Mr. Thomas Walpole, has espoused the sister of Monsieur Francès, Madame de Villegagnon, at Paris, who is no infant neither,—but that is their affair.

I am going to tell you a story, Madam, that perhaps you have heard better from Mr. Fitzpatrick, who was one of the company. Lord Westcote wrote lately to Lord North, that as his Lordship was in so deplorable a condition, he, Lord Westcote, should go over to Mr. Pitt. Soon after, the Speaker, not knowing of that missive, invited Lord Westcote to dinner with a set of the Opposition, who did know a little more of the matter, though pretending ignorance. The conversation soon fell on Lord George Gordon's Mosaic beard on which one of the company said it was lucky when *converts* wore distinguishing marks by which they might be reconnoitred, and the whole dinner was carried on in the same tormenting style.

You will not be less diverted with an anecdote of your aunt. She had a mind to go to Gloucester House, but declared she could not till an affair was arranged, for she had had a quarrel with the Duchess of Gloucester in the year *one*. No mortal could guess what she meant, nor do I know yet, for her Grace of Bedford herself was not born in 1700, nor the Duchess of Gloucester till 1735. The latter said they never could have had a quarrel, for they never had been intimate enough. This anachronism (in her Grace's memory) has somehow or other been rectified, and she has been at Gloucester House.

This is an inordinate postscript, and I will add no more, but that Strawberry has felt many a twitch since the fire at Ampthill.

Dec. 17, 1787.

I was at a rehearsal last night and amazed. Lord Henry [Fitzgerald] is a prodigy, a perfection—all passion, nature and ease; you never saw so genuine a lover. Garrick was a monkey to him in Don Felix: then he is so much the man of fashion, and is so genteel. In short, when people of quality can act, they must act their own parts so much better than others can mimic them! Mr. Merry is an excellent Lissardo too.

2433. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 15, 1788.

All joy to your Ladyship on the success of your theatric campaign. I do think the representation of plays as entertaining and ingenious, as choosing king and queen, and the gambols and mummeries of our ancestors at Christmas; or as making one's neighbours and all their servants drunk, and sending them home ten miles in the dark with the chance of breaking their necks by some comical overturn. I wish I could have been one of the audience; but, alas! I am like the African lamb, and can only feed on the grass and herbs that grow within my reach.

I can make no returns yet from the theatre at Richmond House; the Duke and Duchess do not come till the birthday, and I have been at no more rehearsals, being satisfied with two of the play. Prologue or epilogue there is to be none, as neither the plays nor the performers, in general, are new. The 'Jealous Wife' is to succeed for the exhibition of Mrs. Hobart, who could have no part in 'The Wonder.'

My histrionic acquaintance spreads. I supped at Lady Dorothy Hotham's with Mrs. Siddons, and have visited and been visited by her, and have seen and liked her much, yes, very much, in the passionate scenes in 'Percy;' but I do not admire her in cool declamation, and find her voice very hollow and defective. I asked her in which part she would most wish me to see her? She named Portia in the 'Merchant of Venice;' but I begged to be excused. With all my enthusiasm for Shakspeare, it is one of his plays that I like the least. The story of the caskets is silly, and, except the character of Shylock, I see nothing beyond the attainment of a mortal: Euripides, or Racine or Voltaire, might have written all the rest. Moreover, Mrs. Siddons's warmest devotees do not hold her above a demigoddess in comedy. I have chosen 'Athenais,' in which she is to appear soon; her scorn is admirable.

Of news I have heard none but foreign, nor those more circumstantially than the papers recount. The Russian Empress, the Austrian Emperor, and Mount Vesuvius, are playing the devil with the world. The Parliaments of France, in the usual disproportion of good to evil, are aiming at wrenching from the Crown some freedom

for their country; at a fortunate and wise moment, for the Crown is poor, and cannot bribe even the nobility, who will mutiny since they cannot sell themselves. The elements, too, as if their pensions also were struck off, have vented their wrath on some of the costly cones at Cherbourg. Well! we have a little breathing time, and may play the fool.

A propos to Russia, did you advert, Madam, to the identity of *Prince Alexis of Brunswick*, for so the 'Gazette' was pleased to call him, as if he was nothing but a cadet of a German house. Yet he was the second son of Princess Anne of Mecklenberg, and brother of poor John, the butchered Czar. Alexis was consequently the hereditary right heir of the empire, if right had any title in despotic countries, where accident, address, force, or murder, bestow the crown. It was Mr. Coxe brought me acquainted with that unfortunate branch, and the best thing I know of Catherine was her releasing Alexis and his sisters; but what excuses her imprisoning their father Prince Antony for life, who had no more title to the crown than she herself, or exactly the same—the having married a right candidate.

Puppet-shows are coming on, the birth-day, the parliament, and the trials of Hastings and his imp, Elijah. They will fill the town, I suppose.

Have you discovered nothing of your incendiaries, Madam? I swear by the beard of St. George Gordon, there seems to have been more malice than a spirit of robbery in the double conflagration.

If the young actress who played *Kitty* so admirably in 'High Life below Stairs,' is not engaged at either of the theatres at Blenheim or Winstay, I believe she might have a large salary and free benefit at Richmond House, where they are in sad want of an *Ines* in the 'Wonder'—and I am sure no daughter of Ampthill has *crooked legs*.

2434. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 14, 1788.

Though I cannot use my right hand, as it is muffled up with a little gout, I must send your Ladyship a line or two, as I am extremely concerned at what I have heard. Lady Waldegrave told me yesterday that your house had again been on fire. It is shocking, indeed; and I wonder you have courage to stay in it,

without a whole garrison. I beg at your leisure, Madam, you will tell me if you make any discoveries.

I got cold last week at the play at Richmond House, or rather a violent cough, which, according to the harlequinades of the gout, turned into pain in one of my fingers, and I hope will make its exit there soon, for it is but a slight gambol. Mrs. Damer is ill, and the play is postponed till Monday, if Lord Henry [Fitzgerald] is not run away with in the mean time, for he has raised a thousand passions.

I will not prolong my letter, having had nothing else to say, and now propose to stop my ears, that I may not be tired to death with hearing of Mr. Hastings's trial. Adieu, Madam, yours, &c.

2435. TO THOMAS BARRETT, ESQ.[1]

Berkeley Square, June 5, 1788.

I WISH I could charge myself with any merit, which I always wish to have towards you, dear Sir, in letting Mr. Matthew see Strawberry; but in truth he has so much merit and modesty and taste himself, that I gave him the ticket with pleasure, which it seldom happens to me to do; for most of those who go thither, go because it is the fashion, and because *a party* is a prevailing custom too; and my tranquillity is disturbed, because nobody likes to stay at home. If Mr. Matthew was really entertained, I am glad; but Mr. Wyatt has made him too correct a Goth not to have seen all the imperfections and bad execution of my attempts; for neither Mr. Bentley nor my workmen had *studied* the science, and I was always too desultory and impatient to consider that I should please myself more by allowing time, than by hurrying my plans into execution before they were ripe. My house therefore is but a sketch by beginners, yours is finished by a great master; and if Mr. Matthew liked mine, it was *en virtuose*, who loves the dawnings of an art, or the glimmerings of its restoration.

I finished Mr. Gibbon a full fortnight ago, and was extremely pleased. It is a most wonderful mass of information, not only on history, but almost on all the ingredients of history, as war, government, commerce, coin, and what not. If it has a fault, it is in embracing too much, and consequently in not detailing enough, and

[1] Of Lee, in East Kent; whose seat was built by Mr. Wyatt, and greatly admired by Walpole.—WRIGHT.

in striding backwards and forwards from one set of princes to another, and from one subject to another; so that, without much historic knowledge, and without much memory, and much method in one's memory, it is almost impossible not to be sometimes bewildered: nay, his own impatience to tell what he knows, makes the author, though commonly so explicit, not perfectly clear in his expressions. The last chapter of the fourth volume, I own, made me recoil, and I could scarcely push through it. So far from being Catholic or heretic, I wished Mr. Gibbon had never heard of Monophysites, Nestorians, or any such fools! But the sixth volume made ample amends; Mahomet and the Popes were gentlemen and good company. I abominate fractions of theology and reformation.

Mr. Sheridan, I hear, did not quite satisfy the passionate expectation that had been raised;[1] but it was impossible he could, when people had worked themselves into an enthusiasm of offering fifty—ay, *fifty* guineas for a ticket to hear him. Well! we are sunk and deplorable in many points, yet not absolutely gone, when history and eloquence throw out such shoots! I thought I had outlived my country; I am glad not to leave it desperate! Adieu, dear Sir!

2436. TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, Tuesday night, June 17, 1788.

I GUESS, my dear Lord, and only guess, that you are arrived at Wentworth Castle. If you are not, my letter will lose none of its bloom by waiting for you; for I have nothing fresh to tell you, and only write because you enjoined it. I settled in my Lilliputian towers but this morning. I wish people would come into the country on May-day, and fix in town the first of November. But as they will not, I have made up my mind; and having so little time left, I prefer London, when my friends and society are in it, to living here alone, or with the weird sisters of Richmond and Hampton. I had additional reason now, for the streets are as green as the fields: we are burnt to the bone, and have not a lock of hay to cover our nakedness: oats are so dear, that I suppose they will soon be eaten at Brooks's and fashionable tables as a rarity. The drought has lasted so long, that for this fortnight I have been foretelling hay-

[1] From the speech he made in Westminster Hall, on bringing the charge of cruelty to the Begums of the province of Benares, in the trial of Mr. Hastings.—WALPOLE.

making and winter, which June generally produces; but to day is sultry, and I am not a prophet worth a straw. Though not resident till now, I have flitted backwards and forwards, and last Friday came hither to look for a minute at a ball at Mrs. Walsingham's at Ditton; which would have been very pretty, for she had stuck coloured lamps in the hair of all her trees and bushes, if the east wind had not danced a reel all the time by the side of the river.

Mr. Conway's play,[1] of which your Lordship has seen some account in the papers, has succeeded delightfully, both in representation and applause. The language is most genteel, though translated from verse; and both prologue and epilogue are charming. The former was delivered most justly and admirably by Lord Derby, and the latter with inimitable spirit and grace by Mrs. Damer. Mr. Merry and Mrs. Bruce played excellently too. But General Conway, Mrs. Damer, and everybody else are drowned by Mr. Sheridan, whose renown has engrossed all Fame's tongues and trumpets. Lord Townshend said he should be sorry were he forced to give a vote directly on Hastings, before he had time to cool; and one of the Peers saying the speech had not made the same impression on him, the Marquis replied, A seal might be finely cut, and yet not be in fault for making a bad impression.

I have, you see, been forced to send your Lordship what scraps I brought from town. The next four months, I doubt, will reduce me to my old sterility; for I cannot retail French Gazettes, though as a good Englishman bound to hope they will contain a civil war. I care still less about the double imperial campaign, only hoping that the poor dear Turks will heartily beat both Emperor and Empress. If the first Ottomans could be punished, they deserved it, but the present possessors have as good a prescription on their side as any people in Europe. We ourselves are Saxons, Danes, Normans; our neighbours are Franks, not Gauls; who the rest are, Goths, Gepidæ, Heruli, Mr. Gibbon knows; and the Dutch usurped the estates of herrings, turbots, and other marine indigenæ. Still, though I do not wish the hair of a Turk's beard to be hurt, I do not say that it would not be amusing to have Constantinople taken, merely as a lusty event; for neither could I live to see Athens revive, nor have I much faith in two such bloody-minded vultures, cock and hen, as Catherine

[1] A comedy [called 'False Appearances,'] translated from 'L'Homme du Jour' of Boissy. It was first acted at the private theatre at Richmond-house, and afterwards at Drury-lane.—WALPOLE.

and Joseph, conquering for the benefit of humanity; nor does my Christianity admire the propagation of the Gospel by the mouth of cannon. What desolation of peasants and their families by the episodes of forage and quarters! Oh! I wish Catherine and Joseph were brought to Westminster-hall and worried by Sheridan! I hope, too, that the poor Begums are alive to hear of his speech; it will be some comfort, though I doubt nobody thinks of restoring them a quarter of a lac!

2437. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, July 4, 1788.

I AM soundly rejoiced, my dear Madam, that the present summer is more favourable to me than the last; and that, instead of not answering my letters in three months, you open the campaign first. May not I flatter myself that it is a symptom of your being in better health? I wish, however, you had told me so in positive words, and that all your complaints have left you. Welcome as is your letter, it would have been ten times more welcome bringing me that assurance; for don't think I forget how ill you was last winter. As letters, you say, now keep their coaches, I hope those from Bristol will call often at my door.[1] I promise you I will never be denied to them.

No botanist am I; nor wished to learn from *you*, of all the Muses, that *piping* has a new signification. I had rather that *you* handled an oaten pipe than a carnation one; yet setting layers, I own, is preferable to reading newspapers, one of the chronical maladies of this age. Everybody reads them, nay, quotes them, though everybody knows they are stuffed with lies or blunders. How should it be otherwise? If any extraordinary event happens, who but must hear it before it descends through a coffee-house to the runner of a daily paper? They who are always wanting news, are wanting to hear they don't know what. A lower species, indeed, is that of the

[1] Meaning the establishment of the Mail-coach.—WALPOLE. Miss More, in her last letter, had said,—"Mail-coaches, which come to others, come not to me: letters and newspapers, now that they travel in coaches, like gentlemen and ladies, come not within ten miles of my hermitage; and while other fortunate provincials are studying the world and its ways, and are feasting upon elopements, divorces, and suicides, tricked out in all the elegancies of Mr. Topham's phraseology, I am obliged to be contented with village vices, petty iniquities, and vulgar sins." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 77.—WRIGHT.

scribes you mention, who every night compose a journal for the satisfaction of such *illiterati*, and feed them with all the vices and misfortunes of every private family; nay, they now call it a *duty* to publish all those calamities which decency to wretched relations used in compassion to suppress, I mean self-murder in particular. Mr. [Hesse's] was detailed at length; and to-day that of Lord [Saye and Sele]. The pretence is, *in terrorem*, like the absurd stake and highway of our ancestors; as if there were a precautionary potion for madness, or the stigma of a newspaper were more dreadful than death. Daily journalists, to be sure, are most respectable magistrates! Yes, much like the cobblers that Cromwell made peers.

I do lament your not going to Mr. Conway's play: both the author and actors deserved such an auditor as you, and you deserved to hear them. However, I do not pity *good* people who out of virtue lose or miss any pleasures. Those pastimes fleet as fast as those of the wicked; but, when gone, you saints can sit down and feast on your self-denial, and drink bumpers of satisfaction to the health of your own merit. So truly I don't pity you.

You say you hear no news, yet you quote Mr. Topham;[1] therefore why should I tell you that the King is going to Cheltenham? or that the Baccelli lately danced at the Opera at Paris with a blue bandeau on her forehead, inscribed, *Honi soit qui mal y pense!*[2] Now who can doubt but she is as pure as the Countess of Salisbury?[3] Was not it ingenious? and was not the Ambassador so to allow it? No doubt he took it for a compliment to his own knee.

Well! would we committed nothing but follies! What do we not commit when the abolition of slavery hitches! Adieu!

> Though Cato died, though Tully spoke,
> Though Brutus dealt the godlike stroke,
> Yet perish'd fated Rome.[4]

You have written; and I fear that even if Mr. Sheridan speaks, trade, the modern religion, will predominate. Adieu!

[1] Major Topham was the proprietor of the fashionable morning paper entitled 'The World.' "In this paper," says Mr. Gifford, in his preface to the Baviad, "were given the earliest specimens of those unqualified and audacious attacks on all private character, which the town first smiled at for their quaintness, then tolerated for their absurdity; and—now that other papers equally wicked and more intelligible have ventured to imitate it—will have to lament to the last hour of British liberty." In 1791, Major Topham published the 'Life of John Elwes, the miser,' which Walpole considered one of the most amusing anecdotical books in the English language.—WRIGHT.

[2] While the Duke of Dorset, who kept her, was ambassador at Paris.—WRIGHT.

[3] The Countess of Salisbury, to the fall of whose garter has been attributed the foundation of the Order of the Garter.—BERRY.

[4] From Mr. Nugent's Ode.—CUNNINGHAM

438. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, July 9, 1788.

To be sure, Madam, I was not in good charity with you for not coming to Strawberry, which you have abandoned for these three years. You think to make it up by inquiring after my howd'yedo-ness, and, though I will forgive once more, I will inform your Ladyship that one's self-love is not at all limited to one's specific person, but insinuates itself into everything that belongs to one—to one's house, to one's garden, to one's collection, and

> Feels at each thread, and lives along the line.[1]

People may cram one with attentions, and affront one at the same time, by neglecting some trifling object on which one's heart is set. Lovers gain ground by doting on their charmer's lap-dog, and toad-eaters worship their patroness's taste in every circumstance; they admire her attitude on a hassock or at a quinze-table. These are only general hints; but the corollary is, that Lady Anne is much more in my good graces than the Countess, her honoured mother.

Still I own myself obliged to your Ladyship for the printed advertisement, which I had not seen. Unluckily my self-love does not extend to my writings, and I had rather you had made a visit to Strawberry than an addition to my 'Royal Authors.' As I raise none from the dead till they have been interred in the churchyard of the Temple of Fame, Cheltenham, it is to be hoped, will save me the trouble of a codicil.

Indeed, I have been in doubt whether I had not lately *put up* a prince who had some title to figure in my Catalogue. Mlle. Keralio, in her *Collection des meilleurs Ouvrages François composés par des Femmes*, has produced two little poems, composed in English, by the Duke of Orleans, who was prisoner here for five-and-twenty years after the Battle of Agincourt; but, alas! they are as indifferent as if they had been composed by the present ornament of his title! and therefore, though Christina of Pisan had lent her lover, Lord Salisbury, merit enough to be adopted, I shall not naturalise the French Prince.

[1] Pope.—CUNNINGHAM.

Mr. Selwyn has been confined in town by a fever, and I have not seen him since the royal progress was intended. I do hope his Matson will be illustrated again, as it was at the siege of Gloucester. How happy he would be to have the present Prince of Wales and Duke of York leave their names, with a penknife, on his window, as the sons of Charles I. did,[1] though, unless some of the personages end as unfortunately, he will never be so fond of them.

You know, I suppose, Madam, that the second Prince [the Duke of York] has purchased Oatlands. That, too, is a circumstance that will chime with Selwyn's partialities. King Charles's third son was born there, and called Henry of Oatlands.[2] I am to go thither to-morrow to see the grotto, which I have neglected doing hitherto, though so much within my reach; yes, I am going to see the *speluncam* where—

Dido Dux et —

My verdure begins to recover its bloom, Madam, like yours. I did not despair, for, in this country, nobody pays his debts like rain. It may destroy your flowers, but you cannot complain of want of fruit; cherries, apples, walnuts, are more exuberant than their leaves; I don't believe that a single blossom will fail of coming of age. Cherries, I am told, are cried in London at a half-penny a pound, —Kentish ones, I mean,—which is cheaper than they have been since William the Conqueror landed there.

Having no news for your eye or ear, I enclose a drawing that I got a young lady at Richmond to copy for me t'other day, and which Lady Anne may multiply easily, by tracing over it against the window. I hope you will be as much diverted with it as I was; it proves the truth of the old saying, that two heads are better than one.

As I find I am already too late for our post, which comes in at eleven and goes out at one, for the benefit of trade,—not for the trade of correspondence, I am sure,—I will leave a corner till I have been at Oatlands.

Thursday night.

Woe is me! I don't know whether it is that I am grown old and cross, but I have been disappointed. Oatlands, that my memory had taken it into its head was the centre of Paradise, is not half so Elysian as I used to think. The grotto, a magnificent structure of shell-work, is a square regular edifice, and, which never happed

[1] At Matson in Gloucestershire.—CUNNINGHAM.
[2] Henry Stuart, Duke of Gloucester, died 1660.—CUNNINGHAM.

to grotto before, lives up one pair of stairs, and yet only looks on a bason of dirty water; in short, I am returned to my own Thames with delight, and envy none of the princes of the earth.

2439. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, July 12, 1788.

Won't you repent having opened the correspondence, my dear Madam, when you find my letters come so thick upon you? In this instance, however, I am only to blame in part, for being too ready to take advice, for the sole reason for which advice ever is taken,—because it fell in with my inclination.

You said in your last that you feared you took up time of mine to the prejudice of the public; implying, I imagine, that I might employ it in composing. Waiving both your compliment and my own vanity, I will speak very seriously to you on that subject, and with exact truth. My simple writings have had better fortune than they had any reason to expect; and I fairly believe, in a great degree, because gentlemen-writers, who do not write for interest, are treated with some civility if they do not write absolute nonsense. I think so, because I have not unfrequently known much better works than mine much more neglected, if the name, fortune, and situation of the authors were below mine. I wrote early from youth, spirits, and vanity; and from both the last when the first no longer existed. I now shudder when I reflect on my own boldness; and with mortification, when I compare my own writings with those of any great authors. This is so true, that I question whether it would be possible for me to summon up courage to publish anything I have written, if I could recall time past, and should yet think as I think at present. So much for what is over and out of my power. As to writing now, I have totally forsworn the profession, for two solid reasons. One I have already told you; and it is, that I know my own writings are trifling and of no depth. The other is, that, light and futile as they were, I am sensible they are better than I could compose now. I am aware of the decay of the middling parts I had, and others may be still more sensible of it. How do I know but I am superannuated? nobody will be so coarse as to tell me so; but if I published dotage, all the world would tell me so. And who but runs that risk who is an author after seventy? What happened to the greatest author of this age, and who certainly retained a very consi-

derable portion of his abilities for ten years after my age? Voltaire, at eighty-four, I think, went to Paris to receive the incense, in person, of his countrymen, and to be witness of their admiration of a tragedy he had written at that Methusalem age. Incense he did receive till it choked him; and, at the exhibition of his play, he was actually crowned with laurel in the box where he sat. But what became of his poor play? It died as soon as he did—was buried with him; and no mortal, I dare to say, has ever read a line of it since, it was so bad.[1]

As I am neither by a thousandth part so great, nor a quarter so little, I will herewith send you a fragment that an accidental rencontre set me upon writing, and which I found so flat, that I would not finish it. Don't believe that I am either begging praise by the stale artifice of hoping to be contradicted; or that I think there is any occasion to make you discover my caducity. No; but the fragment contains a curiosity—English verses written by a French Prince of the blood,[2] and which at first I had a mind to add to my 'Royal and Noble Authors;' but as he was not a royal author of ours, and as I could not please myself with an account of him, I shall revert to my old resolution of not exposing my pen's grey hairs.

Of one passage I must take notice; it is a little indirect sneer at our crowd of authoresses. My choosing to send this to *you*, is a proof that I think you an author, that is, a classic. But, in truth, I am nauseated by the Madams Piozzi, &c., and the host of novel-writers in petticoats, who think they imitate what is inimitable, 'Evelina' and 'Cecilia.' Your candour, I know, will not agree with me, when I tell you I am not at all charmed with Miss Seward and Mr. Hayley piping to one another:[3] but *you* I exhort, and would encourage to write; and flatter myself you will never be royally gagged and promoted to fold muslins, as has been lately wittily said on Miss Burney, in the List of five hundred living authors. *Your* writings promote virtues; and their increasing editions prove their worth and utility. If you question my sincerity, can you doubt

[1] Madame du Deffand, in a letter to Walpole of the 8th of March 1778, says—"Voltaire se porte bien: il est uniquement occupé de sa tragédie d'Irène; on assure qu'on la jouera de demain en huit: si elle n'a pas de succès, il en mourra." On the 18th, she again writes—"Le succès de la pièce a été très médiocre; il y eut cependant beaucoup de claquemens de mains, mais c'était plus Voltaire qui en était l'objet que la pièce." He died in the May following.—WRIGHT.

[2] Charles, Duke of Orleans, who being taken prisoner at the battle of Azincourt, was brought to England, and detained here for twenty-five years. For a copy of the verses, see 'Walpole's Works,' vol. i. p. 564.—WRIGHT.

[3] See vol. viii. p. 241.—CUNNINGHAM

my admiring you, when you have gratified my self-love so amply in your 'Bas Bleu?' Still, as much as I love your writings, I respect yet more your heart and your goodness. You are so good that I believe you would go to heaven, even though there were no Sunday, and only six *working* days in the week. Adieu, my best Madam!

2440. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, July 22, 1788.

I KNOW well, Madam, that I ought to have thanked you sooner for the double heads drawn by Lady Anne, who has married them very happily; but, however full the heart may be of gratitude, thanks will not fill a letter, and you certainly had rather receive a phial of news than a quart of effusions of all the virtues that could be distilled; but, alas! my laboratory is as empty of novelty as of such essences, and, like an apothecary's shop, has only empty gallipots, with labels of what they ought to contain, gratitude excepted, which I have in the root.

You say, Madam, you did not leave yourself room to form a new Administration. I have plainly paper enough before me for that purpose; but there too, I am no adept, and content myself, like the sovereign maker of ministers, with being more glad of those I get rid of, than fond of their successors. Were I in town, I should chiefly take care to avoid being within reach of the bludgeon fist of Mrs. H., who must be in a sweet mood on having lost her trident, after all her intrigues, to fix it in her brother's hand. I started prodigiously into her favour the last time General Conway came into place, and she told me her eldest niece was passionately fond of poetry, and died to read my Tragedy, which I lent her. Mr. Conway went out, and I never heard more of Miss's taste for the *belles lettres*. In her room, I have got a new admirer, though an anonymous one. It is the gentleman[1] who has dedicated to me and Sir Joshua Reynolds two quarto pieces, called 'Imperfect Hints for a new Edition of Shakspeare.' In one of the notes, the author, with great good-nature, calls me *Time-honoured Lancaster*. Beshrew me, little did I think that my shadow of a person would, in any point, ever come in contact with the giant mould of John of Gaunt; but I find that one has nothing to do but to

[1] Malone?—CUNNINGHAM.

live long enough, and somehow or other, one may grow like to anybody: but I must tell your Ladyship of a more diverting application, if not of an ancient passage, at least of venerable customs. You may know, perhaps, that in days of yore, the flaps of seats in choirs of cathedrals were decorated with sculptures, sometimes with legends, often, alas! with devices, at best ludicrous, frequently not fit to meet the eye of modesty! Well, Madam, two new stalls being added in the church of St. George, at Windsor, as niches for the supernumerary knights that have been added, the costume has been observed and carried on in the new flaps—not to call up a blush in the cheek of Mother Church, but in the true Catholic spirit; one of the bas-reliefs I do not know, but probably the martyrdom of St. Edmund the King; the other is the ineffected martyrdom of George the King, by Margaret Nicholson. The body-coachman is standing by to ascertain the precise moment. If you had not heard of this decoration, I will not say, Madam, that I had no news to send you; at least I may subscribe myself

Your Ladyship's humble clerke and antiquarie,

H. W

2441. TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 2, 1788.

Matter for a letter, alas! my dear Lord, I have none; but *about* letters I have great news to tell your Lordship, only may the goddess of post-offices grant it be true! A Miss Sayer, of Richmond, who is at Paris, writes to Mrs. Boscawen, that a Baron de la Garde (I am sorry there are so many *a*'s in the genealogy of my story,) has found in a *vieille armoire* five hundred more letters of Madame de Sévigné, and that they will be printed if the expense is not too great. I am in a taking lest they should not appear before I set out for the Elysian fields; for, though the writer is one of the first personages I should inquire after on my arrival, I question whether St. Peter has taste enough to know where she lodges. He is more likely to be acquainted with St. Catherine of Sienna and St. Undecimillia; and therefore I had rather see the letters themselves. It is true, I have no small doubt of the authenticity of the legend; and nothing will persuade me of its truth so much as the non-appearance of the letters—a melancholy kind of conviction. But I vehemently suspect some new coinage, like the letters of Ninon de l'Enclos, Pope Ganganelli, and the Princess Palatine. I have lately been reading some fragments

of letters of the Duchess of Orleans, which are certainly genuine, and contain some curious circumstances; for though she was a simple gossiping old gentlewoman, yet many little facts she could not help learning: and, to give her her due, she was ready to tell all she knew. To our late Queen [Caroline, Queen of George II.] she certainly did write often; and her Majesty, then only Princess, was full as ready to pay her in her own coin, and a pretty considerable treaty of commerce for the exchange of scandal was faithfully executed between them; insomuch that I remember to have heard forty years ago, that our gracious Sovereign [George II.] entrusted her Royal Highness of Orleans with an intrigue of one of her women of the bedchamber, Mrs. Selwyn,[1] to wit; and the good Duchess entrusted it to so many other dear friends that at last it got into the 'Utrecht Gazette,' and came over hither, to the signal edification of the Court of Leicester-fields. This is an additional reason, besides the internal evidence, for my believing the letters genuine. This old dame was mother of the Regent; and when she died, somebody wrote on her tomb, *Cy gist l'Oisiveté.* This came over too; and nobody could expound it, till our then third Princess, Caroline, unravelled it,—Idleness is the mother of all vice.

I wish well enough to posterity to hope that dowager Highnesses will imitate the practice, and write all the trifles that occupy their royal brains; for the world so at least learns some true history, which their husbands never divulge, especially if they are privy to their own history, which their Ministers keep from them as much as possible. I do not believe the present King of France knows much more of what he, or rather his Queen, is actually doing, than I do. I rather pity him; for I believe he means well, which is not a common article of my faith.

I shall go about the end of this week to Park-place, where I expect to find the Druidic temple from Jersey erected. How dull will the world be, if constant pilgrimages are not made thither! where, besides the delight of the scenes, that temple, the great rude arch, Lady Aylesbury's needle-works, and Mrs. Damer's 'Thame' and 'Isis' on Henley Bridge, with other of her sculptures, make it one of the most curious spots in the island, and unique. I want to have Mr. Conway's comedy acted there; and then the father, mother, and daughter would exhibit a theatre of arts as uncommon. How I regret that your Lordship did not hear Mrs. Damer speak the Epilogue!

[1] Mary Selwyn, "mother of the famous George." Compare vol. i. p. cxxxiv.—CUNNINGHAM.

2442. TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.

DEAR SIR: *Strawberry Hill, Aug.* 14, 1788.

THE new regulation of the post proves very inconvenient to this little district. It arrives and departs again in half-an-hour; so that having a visit when I received your letter of yesterday, I could not possibly answer it then, nor can I write now expeditiously, as for these thirteen days I have had a third fit of the gout in my left arm and hand, and can barely hold the paper.

Your intelligence of the jubilees to be celebrated in Scotland in honour of the Revolution was welcome indeed. It is a favourable symptom of an age when its festivals are founded on good sense and liberality of sentiment, and not to perpetuate superstition and slavery. Your countrymen, Sir, have proved their good sense, too, in their choice of a poet. Your writings breathe the noble generous spirit congenial to the institution. Give me leave to say, that it is very flattering to me to have the ode communicated to me; I will not say, to be consulted, for of that distinction I am not worthy: I am not a poet, and am sure I cannot improve your ideas, which you have expressed with propriety and clearness, the necessary ingredients of an address to a populous meeting; for I doubt our numerous audiences are not arrived at Olympic taste enough to seize with enthusiasm the eccentric flights of Pindar. You have taken a more rational road to inspiration, by adhering to the genuine topics of the occasion; and you speak in so manly a style, that I do not believe a more competent judge could amend your poetry. I approve of it so much, that if you commanded me to alter it, I would alter but one word, and would insert but one more. In the second stanza, for

Here ever *gleam'd* the patriot sword

I would rather read,

Here ever *flash'd*

as I think *gleamed* not forcible enough for the thought, nor expressive enough of the vigorous ardour of your heroes. In the third stanza, I think there wants a syllable, not literally, but to the ear:

And slavery with Arts unbleat.

Slavery, if pronounced as three syllables, does not satisfy the fulness of harmony; and, besides, obliges the tongue to dwell too strongly on *with*, which ought not to occupy much accent. An epithet to Arts would make the whole line sonorous.

These are trifling criticisms of a trifling critic, but they mark both my attention and satisfaction with your Ode. I must add, how beautifully is introduced *innocent of blood!* How ought that circumstance to be dwelt upon at the Jubilee of the Revolution!

I will tell you how more than occasionally the mention of Pindar slipped into my pen. I have frequently, and even yesterday, wished that some attempt were made to ennoble our horse-races, particularly at Newmarket, by associating better arts with the courses; as, by contributing for odes, the best of which should be rewarded by medals. Our nobility would find their vanity gratified; for, as the pedigrees of their steeds would soon grow tiresome, their own genealogies would replace them; and, in the mean time, poetry and medals would be improved. Their Lordships would have judgment enough to know if their horse (which should be the impression on one side) were not well executed; and, as I hold that there is no being more difficult to draw well than a horse, no bad artist could be employed. Such a beginning would lead further; and the cup or plate for the prize might rise into beautiful verses. But this is a vision; and I may as well go to bed and dream of anything else. I do not return the Ode, which I flatter myself you meant I should keep.

P.S. I must not forget how difficult it is to write to a given tune, especially with so much ease as you have done; and nothing is more happy than making *November smile as May*.

2443. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 16, 1788.

Most true, Madam, neither my person nor age seem suited to be prominent on the hustings; but my long connection with Lord John's grandmother, and thence with him, made it impossible for me to avoid contributing my vote; but I contrived so well, that I was in my own house again by twenty minutes after nine in the morning; and by choosing a Monday, before the mob had recovered their drunkenness of the Sabbath, there was much less crowd in the

Garden [Covent Garden] than on a common market-day. A week later, and I must have been carried on a chairman's horse—an exhibition I should have excused myself: in a word, I have been confined a fortnight by the gout in my left arm, hand, and knee, and cannot yet put on a coat. Having had two fits in the winter, I expected nothing less than a third; now I find that there are three tyrants against whom no prescription holds, and I shall add to that righteous maxim of the lawyers, *Nullum tempus occurrit regi, et ecclesiæ, et podagræ:* however long ago, however lately they have signed a release, they can re-enter on the premises and take possession.

Mr. Selwyn, I do not doubt, is superlatively happy. I am curious to know what relics he has gleaned from the royal visit, that he can *bottle* up and place in his *sanctum sanctorum*. Peter Pindar,[1] probably, has collected other droppings. *A propos*, Madam, have you seen the two volumes of 'Extracts from the Letters of the Regent's Mother to Queen Caroline?' They will entertain you exceedingly, and I have no doubt of their authenticity. I know these royal dames gossiped together; and Madame d'Orleans was so careless, that one of our Queen's letters got into the 'Utrecht Gazette' at the time, and contained an intrigue of one of her women of the bedchamber.[2]

The Selwyn I do not expect soon at Richmond, for the Carlisles are going to Cheltenham; but so many loadstones draw him, that I, who have no attraction, seldom see him. In truth I wonder your Ladyship has patience with me as a correspondent, for it is difficult to be one of this world less than I am. Fontenelle and others have made the dead converse, but you *hold a talk* with a Strulbrug, who is not half so good company; nay, I should scarce have been taken notice of at the election, unless it was supposed that it was my ghost that appeared, and consequently I shall be charged as one of Lord John's bad votes; and Mr. Samuel Martin would be ready to swear to my non-existence—he who, I have good reason to think, above a dozen years ago, bribed my own gardener, when I was very ill in London, to go to town and insist upon *seeing* me. As, at least, then I was alive, I was so ill-natured as to give him ocular proof. In another illness, when his hopes were again raised, he sent to my deputy, and threatened to turn him out, should I fail, if he did not inform him of the true worth of my office. I made an epigram on

[1] Dr. Wolcot.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] Mrs. Selwyn to wit. See p. 137.—CUNNINGHAM.

the occasion, in which I offered to satisfy him myself, except by dying. I forget all but the two last lines:

> —— But as I love not target, meat, or wine,
> Ask me whate'er you will—except to dine.

But I think my living to the length of an epic poem, is more severe than any distich; and I do not believe there is an archbishop in England that would not willingly be so uncharitable as to live to the age of Methusalem, if he knew who was to be his successor.

Are not you diverted, Madam, with the nonplus of Cæsar and Semiramis? To be beaten at her own door by a pert little Swede, when she was preparing to be crowned in Santa Sophia: what if she should be overturned as Pindarically as she was exalted! I have an instance of a deposed sovereign in my neighbourhood, of a very different character, the late Queen of Pennsylvania. Lady Juliana Penn, once mistress of a revenue of 36,000*l.* a year, is now lodging modestly, humbly, and tranquilly at Petersham on 600*l.* a year; and her mind is so reconciled to her fortune, that she is still very handsome. She is to breakfast here soon, and I shall think Matson was not more honoured.

2444. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

DEAR MADAM: *Strawberry Hill, Aug.* 17, 1788.

IN this great discovery of a new mine of Madame de Sévigné's letters, my faith, I confess, is not quite firm. Do people sell houses wholesale, without opening their cupboards? This age, too, deals so much in false coinage, that booksellers and Birmingham give equal vent to what is not sterling; with the only difference, that the shillings of the latter pretend that the names are effaced, while the wares of the former pass under borrowed names. Have we not seen, besides all the Testamens Politiques, the spurious letters of Ninon de l'Enclos, of Pope Ganganelli, and the Memoirs of the Princess Palatine? This is a little mortifying, while we know that there actually exists at Naples a whole library of genuine Greek and Latin authors; most of whom, probably, have never been in print; and where, it is not unnatural to suppose, the works of some classics, yet lost, may be in being, and the remainder of some of the best. Yet, at the rate in which they proceed to unroll, it would take as many centuries to bring them to light, as have elapsed since they were

overwhelmed. Nay, another eruption of Vesuvius may return all the volumes to chaos! Omar is stigmatised for burning the library of Alexandria. Is the King of Naples less a Turk? Is not it almost as unconscientious to keep a seraglio of virgin authors under the custody of nurses, as of blooming Circassians? Consider, my dear Madam, I am past seventy, or I should not be so ungallant as to make the smallest comparison between the contents of the two harems. Your picture, which hangs near my elbow, would frown, I am sure, if I had any light meaning.

2445. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 6, 1788.

I AM not apt to boast, Madam; yet, considering that I have had three legal fits of the gout in eight months, I am as much a Hercules again as a gentleman cut out of paper can be. Nay, I have been to Park-place on a pilgrimage to little Master Stonehenge, *alias* the Druids' Temple from Jersey, which is now erected on the back of an eminent hill, with two wings of fir-groves at small distances, and is seen from the garden over a long ridge of firs that shoot up from the side of the beautiful descending valley. Every morsel of stone that formed the circle originally, is placed to an inch in its primitive position; and though the whole is diminutive, yet being seen on the horizon, it looks very high-priestly, and in that broken country may easily be taken for respectable ruins of an ancient castle, or Caractacus s own summer-residence. Park-place is now one of the spots the most deserving to be visited in our island; for, besides the variety of the ground, the diversity of the landscapes and prospects, all glittering with meanders of the Thames at a distance, or washed by it as it borders the shores, what singular objects are to be seen there!—the rocky bridge, the Druidic temple, Lady Aylesbury's worked pictures, and Henley Bridge, with Mrs. Damer's colossal heads of the Thame and Isis. In short, Park-place would not have been an unworthy codicil to Lady Anne's tour, though two of my favourites, the historic Castle of Warwick, and the pretty appendix to history, Matson, were delightful ingredients of it. Methinks the loyalty of the master of the latter was not displayed with the judgment of an old courtier, especially as I believe his own sentiments were as little in harmony with what he left and what he removed, as with his sovereign's.

Ragley is superb—that is, the situation, and the dimensions of the house, but has nothing else to occupy or detain one a moment. I remember, when I was at Matson, the poor mad gentlewoman who made an aviary of the cathedral, in hopes that the soul of her only daughter would come and pick some seeds in the shape of a robin-redbreast; panes were left void of glass in the windows, lest the ghostly dicky-birds should cut their feet, and pans of seeds were dispersed around, and constant feasts made, as if Bel and the Dragon were come to breakfast; but the Chapter found their account, for the metempsychosian gentlewoman new-paved the tabernacle, and painted and white-washed, so no church or cage was ever kept more snug.

I allow your Ladyship's observations on the Duchess of Orleans, and own she often censures Mad. de Maintenon in the wrong place; and certainly knew no more than she could not help knowing; but most of those traits are very characteristic, and I firmly believe her, for her sincerity on her own homeliness and ugly hands show her frank love of truth as far as it came within her reach. I have since been reading in the 'Esprit des Journaux' an account of a late Bishop of Amiens, who was a saint, and yet had a great deal of wit. A lady went to consult him whether she might wear *rouge:* she had been with several *directeurs*, but some were so severe, and some so relaxed, that she could not satisfy her conscience, and therefore was come to Monseigneur to decide for her, and would rest by his sentence. "I see, Madam," said the good Prelate, "what the case is: some of your casuists forbid *rouge* totally; others will permit you to wear as much as you please. Now, for my part, I love a medium in all things, and therefore I permit you to wear *rouge* on one cheek only."

I cannot say there will be quite so much wit in the anecdote I am going to tell you next. Lady Greenwich t'other day, in a conversation with Lady Tweeddale, named the Saxons (the Lord knows how that happened). "The Saxons, my dear!" cried the Marchioness, "who were they?" "Lord, Madam, did your Ladyship never read the History of England?" "No, my dear; pray who wrote it?" Don't it put you in mind of Mattœ and the Allogobroges in Grammont? *Voici* a second dialogue of the same dame with the Duchess of Argyll, who went to her to hire a house the Marchioness has here on Twickenham Common, for her brother General Gunning.

Marchioness.—But will he pay me for it?

Duchess.—Madam, my brother can afford to pay for it; and if he cannot, I can.

Marchioness.—Oh! I am glad I shall have my money—well, my dear, but am I to wish you joy on Lady Augusta's marriage?

Duchess.—No great joy, Madam: there was no great occasion for Lady Augusta Campbell to be married.

Marchioness.—Lord, my dear, I wonder to hear *you* say so, who have been married twice.

You say, Madam, you send me trash—pray, what do I send in return?—but you must recollect, that I know no more than the Duchess of Orleans. However, as I have some paper left, if my packet is stuffed with trumpery, at least it shall be full of it, and I will add one more story which Lady Onslow told me lately. Once, when her lord was absent for a fortnight, she invited an officer to keep her company, to the great scandal of a prudish lady her neighbour, and of whom she asked leave to carry him into her pew at church, which the other, though with marks of surprise and indignation, could not avoid permitting. Sunday came, and my Lady and the Major—yet, though the Minister had begun the service, the prude could not help whispering Lady O., "You did not tell me the Major had grey hair!"

Such is the lore, Madam, in which I am versed! Dowagers are the evergreens among which I am planted, and whence I can gather nothing *couleur de rose* to send you. Though we have young Princes to entertain the young world with their amours and their buildings, I pass most of my elderly hours with no better company than myself, and live upon the remnant of my memory, which is not in the highest preservation. I am glad, however, to read in the newspapers, that the Archbishop of Sens is removed in France, and Monsieur Necker reinstated. I know the former well, he was my dear old friend's nephew, and is the most ambitious man alive, and in time of less distress would have been a thorn in our side, whom he hates supremely. Necker, not being a Frenchman, and being a Protestant, cannot be our personal foe; and from his profession and habitudes, and, above all, having no chance of remaining in power, but by attempting to restore their finances, war is the last instrument he will employ.

"Peace is my dear delight, not Fleury's more,"[1] nor his compeer's, my father. I am glad that those gigantic incendiaries, the

[1] Pope.—CUNNINGHAM.

Russian Empress and Austrian Emperor, are so hampered, disappointed, mortified; nay, I prefer to them even the whore of Babylon and Pagan Turks, who were living quietly and honestly on the cheats and robberies of their predecessors and forefathers, and disturbed nobody. Good night! Madam, when you are tired of my village tales, you may easily check me: they are welcome to die where they sprung.

2446. TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 12, 1788.

My late fit of gout, though very short, was a very authentic one, my dear Lord, and the third I have had since Christmas. Still, of late years, I have suffered so little pain, that I can justly complain of nothing but the confinement, and the debility of my hands and feet, which, however, I can still use to a certain degree; and as I enjoy such good spirits and health in the intervals, I look upon the gout as no enemy; yet I know it is like the compacts said to be made with the Devil, (no kind comparison to a friend!) who showers his favours on the contractors, but is sure to seize and carry them off at last.

I would not say so much of myself, but in return to your Lordship's obliging concern for me: yet, insignificant as the subject, I have no better in bank; and if I plume myself on the tolerable state of my outward man, I doubt your Lordship finds that age does not treat my interior so mildly as the gout does the other. If my letters, as you are pleased to say, used to amuse you, you must perceive how insipid they are grown, both from my decays and from the little intercourse I have with the world. Nay, I take care not to aim at false vivacity: what do the attempts of age at liveliness prove but its weakness? What the 'Spectator' said wittily, ought to be practised in sober sadness by old folks: when he was dull, he declared it was by design. So far, to be sure, we ought to observe it, as not to affect more spirits than we possess. To be purposely stupid, would be forbidding our correspondents to continue the intercourse; and I am so happy in enjoying the honour of your Lordship's friendship, that I will be content (if you can be so) with my natural inanity, without studying to increase it.

I have been at Park-place, and assure your Lordship that the Druidic temple vastly more than answers my expectation. Small it

is, no doubt, when you are within the enclosure, and but a chapel of ease to Stonehenge; but Mr. Conway has placed it with so much judgment, that it has a lofty effect, and infinitely more than it could have had if he had yielded to Mrs. Damer's and my opinion, who earnestly begged to have it placed within the enclosure of the home-grounds. It now stands on the ridge of the high hill without, backed by the horizon, and with a grove on each side at a little distance; and, being exalted beyond and above the range of firs that climb up the sides of the hill from the valley, wears all the appearance of an ancient castle, whose towers are only shattered, not destroyed; and devout as I am to old castles, and small taste as I have for the ruins of ages absolutely barbarous, it is impossible not to be pleased with so very rare an antiquity so absolutely perfect, and it is difficult to prevent visionary ideas from improving a prospect.

If, as Lady Anne Conolly told your Lordship, I have had a great deal of company, you must understand it of my house, not of me; for I have very little. Indeed, last Monday both my house and I were included. The Duke of York sent me word the night before, that he would come and see it, and of course I had the honour of showing it myself. He said, and indeed it seemed so, that he was much pleased; at least, I had every reason to be satisfied; for I never saw any Prince more gracious and obliging, nor heard one utter more personally kind speeches.

I do not find that *her Grace* the Countess of Bristol's[1] Will is really known yet. They talk of two Wills—to be sure, in her double capacity; and they say she has made three co-heiresses to her jewels, the Empress of Russia, Lady Salisbury, and the whore of Babylon.[2] The first of those legatees, I am not sorry, is in a piteous scrape: I like the King of Sweden no better than I do her and the Emperor; but it is good that two destroyers should be punished by a third, and that two crocodiles should be gnawed by an insect. Thank God! *we* are not only at peace, but in full plenty—nay, and in full beauty too. Still better; though we have had rivers of rain, it has not, contrary to all precedent, washed away our warm weather. September, a month I generally dislike for its irresolute mixture of warm and cold, has hitherto been peremptorily fine. The apple and walnut trees bend down with fruit, as in a poetic description of Paradise.

[1] The Duchess-Countess of Kingston and Bristol died at Paris in August.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] The newspapers had circulated a report, that the Duchess of Kingston had bequeathed her diamonds to the Empress of Russia and his Holiness the Pope.—WRIGHT

2447. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 22, 1788.

I DON'T like to defraud you of your compassion, my good friend, profuse as you are of it. I really suffered scarce any pain at all from my last fit of gout. I have known several persons who think there is a dignity in complaining; and, if you ask how they do, reply, "Why, I *am*—pretty well—to-day; but if you knew what I suffered *yesterday!*" Now, methinks nobody has a right to tax another for pity on what is past; and besides, complaint of what is over can only make the hearer glad you are in pain no longer. Yes, yes, my dear Madam, you generally place your pity so profitably, that you shall not waste a drop upon me, who ought rather to be congratulated on being so well at my age.

Much less shall I allow you to make apologies for your admirable and proper conduct towards your poor *protegée* [Mrs. Yearsley]. And now you have told me the behaviour of a certain great dame, I will confess to you that I have known it some months by accident—nay, and tried to repair it. I prevailed on Lady * * * * *, who as readily undertook the commission, and told the Countess of her treatment of you. Alas! the answer was, "It is too late; I have no money." No! but she has, if she has a diamond left. I am indignant; yet, do you know, not at this duchess, or that countess, but at the invention of ranks, and titles, and pre-eminence. I used to hate that king and t'other prince; but, alas! on reflection I find the censure ought to fall on human nature in general. They are made of the same stuff as we, and dare we say what we should be in their situation? Poor creatures! think how they are educated, or rather corrupted, early, how flattered! To be educated properly, they should be led through hovels, and hospitals, and prisons. Instead of being reprimanded (and perhaps immediately after *sugar-plum'd*) for not learning their Latin or French grammar, they now and then should be kept fasting; and, if they cut their finger, should have no plaster till it festered. No part of a royal brat's memory, which is good enough, should be burthened but with the remembrance of human sufferings. I short, I fear our nature is so liable to be corrupted and perverted by greatness, rank, power, and wealth, that I am inclined to think that virtue is the compensation to the poor

for the want of riches: nay, I am disposed to believe that the first footpad or highwayman had been a man of quality, or a prince, who could not bear having wasted his fortune, and was too lazy to work; for a beggar-born would think labour a more natural way of getting a livelihood than venturing his life. I have something a similar opinion about common women. No modest girl thinks of many men, till she has been in love with *one*, been ruined by him, and abandoned. But to return to my theme, and it will fall heavy on yourself. Could the milkwoman have been so bad, if you had merely kept her from starving, instead of giving her opulence? The soil, I doubt, was bad; but it could not have produced the rank weed of ingratitude, if you had not dunged it with gold, which rises from rock, and seems to meet with a congenial bed when it falls on the human heart.

And so Dr. Warton imagines I am writing 'Walpoliana!' No, in truth, nor anything else; nor shall—nor will I go out in a jest-book. Age has not only made me prudent, but, luckily, lazy; and, without the latter extinguisher, I do not know but that farthing candle my discretion would let my snuff of life flit to the last sparkle of folly, like what children call the parson and clerk in a bit of burnt paper. You see by my *writability* in pressing my letters on you, that my pen has still a colt's tooth left, but I never indulge the poor old child with more paper than this small-sized sheet; I do not give it enough to make a paper kite and fly abroad on wings of booksellers. *You* ought to continue writing, for you do good by your writings, or at least mean it; and if a virtuous intention fails, it is a sort of coin, which, though thrown away, still makes the donor worth more than he was before he gave it away. I delight too in the temperature of your piety, and that you would not see the enthusiastic exorcist. How shocking to suppose that the Omnipotent Creator of worlds delegates his power to a momentary insect to eject supernatural spirits that he had permitted to infest another insect, and had permitted to vomit blasphemies against himself! Pray do not call *that* enthusiasm, but delirium. I pity real enthusiasts, but I would shave their heads and take away some blood. The exorcist's associates are in a worse predicament, I doubt, and hope to *make* enthusiasts. If such abominable impostors were not rather a subject of indignation, I could smile at the rivalship between them and the animal magnetists, who are inveigling fools into their different pales. And, alas! while folly has a shilling left, there will be enthusiasts and quack doctors; and there will be slaves while there

are kings or sugar-planters.[1] I have remarked that though Jesuists &c., travel to distant East and West to propagate their religion and traffic, I never heard of one that made a journey into Asia or Africa to preach the doctrines of liberty, though those regions are so deplorably oppressed. Nay, I much doubt whether ever any chaplain of the regiments we have sent to India has once whispered to a native of Bengal, that there are milder forms of government than those of his country. No; security of property is not a wholesome doctrine to be inculcated in a land where the soil produces diamonds and gold! In short, if your Bristol exorcist believes he can cast out devils, why does he not go to Leadenhall Street? There is a company whose name is Legion.

By your *gambols*, as you call them, after the most ungamboling peeress in Christendom, and by your jaunts, I conclude, to my great satisfaction, that you are quite well. Change of scene and air are good for your spirits; and September, like all our old ladies, has given itself May airs, and must have made your journey very pleasant. Yet you will be glad to get back to your Cowslip-green, though it may offer you nothing but Michaelmas daisies. When you do leave it, I wish you could persuade Mrs. Garrick to settle sooner in London. There is full as good hay to be made in town at Christmas as at Hampton, and some haymakers that will wish for you particularly. Your most sincere friend.

2448. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 24, 1788.

Mere answers, that are not made to letters immediately, are like good things that people recollect they might have said, if they had thought on them in time: that is, very insipid, and the *à propos* very probably forgotten; yet, as I have taken out my doctor's degree in insipidity, I shall not scruple acting in character, but shall reply

[1] In the letter to which this is a reply, Miss More had said—"In vain do we boast of the enlightened eighteenth century, and conceitedly talk as if human reason had not a manacle left about her, but that philosophy had broken down all the strongholds of prejudice, ignorance, and superstition; and yet at this very time Mesmer has got a hundred thousand pounds by animal magnetism in Paris, and Mainanduc is getting as much in London. There is a fortune-teller in Westminster who is making little less. Lavater's Physiognomy-books sell at fifteen guineas a set. The divining-rod is still considered as oracular in many places. Devils are cast out by seven ministers; and, to complete the disgraceful catalogue, slavery is vindicated in print, and defended in the House of Peers." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 120.—Wright.

to the items in your Ladyship's last, in as dull and downright a manner as if I were of any of the learned professions, and were consulted by you.

The fragment of prologue you sent me I like much; the description of Dr. Johnson is very just; and for me, though I am numbered among the blue stockings, my stockings are so very thin, that not a thread aches at the laugh at them.

The person you wish to be acquainted with, Madam, that you may question him on many particulars of his book, is a most worthy man, who would be very proud of the honour of being presented to your Ladyship, but I doubt whether you would admire him as much as his heroes. He is very grave, very circumstantial, and his visits are not epigrams; but then he lives at the end of the world, as you do at the beginning, and you would see him but seldom.

The flaming patriot that was willing to go to the Devil to save country gentlemen from the weight of the land-tax, I should think was a Jacobite parson, who hated the Revolution, and had many disciples in the class of squires. There must have been something of the Church in such zeal; and I dare to say he thought there was a back door from Hell into the vestry, by which he should escape and get absolution from some nonjuring brother. The patriots I have seen of later days have not been formed of such combustible ingredients. Oh no! *per contra;* and as Bossuet, I think, wrote against the Huguenots 'L'Historie des Variations,' a second part might be added on the civil variations of English Protestants or *Protesters.*

On the Duchess of Kingston I have nothing to say: I was weary of her folly and vanity long ago, and now look on her only as a big bubble that is burst.

New game, or village anecdotes, I have none to send you, Madam; nor from my own narrow circle, but that I have had a sort of *impromptu* visit from the Duke of York. He sent me word, one evening, that if I were alone he would come with some company and see my house; but it proving too late, he appointed the next day, and came. As I had never been presented to him, I asked leave at the door to kiss his hand, but he would not suffer it; and indeed the whole time he stayed, which was about an hour, it was impossible to be more gracious, or to say more obliging things. His uncle, the late Duke, surprised me still more suddenly eight-and-twenty years ago. Two Dukes of York, at such a distance of time, make me seem to have lived till the same adventures come round again to me in different



MISS MARY BERRY.

FROM A BUST IN THE POSSESSION OF SIR ALEXANDER JOHNST

reigns. You must not wonder, Madam, if I give myself the airs of a patriarch, when I am so like Abraham, who at very distant periods had exactly the same incidents happen to him twice from two princes about his wife; for Sarah's charms, it seems, remained in fashion as long as Strawberry's, though one should have thought that young princes would not have an appetite for anything so Gothic as either.

I have answered; I have related; and I have not a syllable more to say, but good night, my dear Lady.

P.S. In exchange for the prologue, Madam, I send you the inscription which the Council of Jersey sent over to General Conway, with the Druidic temple :—

Pour des siècles caché aux regards des mortels
Cet ancien monument, ces pierres, ces autels,
Où le sang des humains offert en sacrifice
Rouissela pour des Dieux, qu'enfanta le caprice;
Ce monument sans prix par son antiquité,
Temoignera pour nous à la postérité
Que dans tous les dangers Cesarée eut un père,
Attentif et vaillant, généreux et prospère,
Et redira, Conway, aux siècles à venir,
Qu'en vertu du respect dû à ce souvenir,
Elle te fit ce don, acquis à ta vaillance,
Comme un juste tribut de sa reconnoissance.

2449. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 11, 1788.

I AM sorry, Madam, that *Mes Villageoises* have no better provender than my *syllogisms* to send to their correspondents, nor am I ambitious of rivalling the barber or innkeeper, and becoming the wit of five miles round. I remember how, long ago, I estimated local renown at its just value by a sort of little adventure that I will tell you; and, since that, there is an admirable chapter somewhere in Voltaire which shows that more extended fame is but local on a little larger scale; it is the chapter of the Chinese who goes into a European bookseller's shop, and is amazed at finding none of the works of his most celebrated countrymen; while the bookseller finds the stranger equally ignorant of western classics.

Well, Madam, here is my tiny story: I went once with Mr. Rigby to see a window of painted glass at Messling, in Essex, and dined at a better sort of alehouse. The landlady waited on us and was

notably loquacious, and entertained us with the *bons-mots* and funny exploits of Mr. Charles; Mr. Charles said this, Mr. Charles played such a trick: oh! nothing was so pleasant as Mr. Charles. But how astonished the poor soul was when we asked who Mr. Charles was; and how much more astonished when she found we had never heard of Mr. Charles Luchyn, who, it seems, is a relation of Lord Grimston, had lived in their village, and been the George Selwyn of half a dozen cottages.

If I had a grain of ambitious pride left, it is what, in other respects, has been the thread that has run through my life, that of being forgotten; so true, except the folly of being an author, has been what I said last year to the Prince of Wales [George IV.] when he asked me if I was a Freemason, I replied, "No, Sir; I never was anything."

A propos to the Prince; I am sorry you do not approve of my offering to kiss the Duke's hand when he came to see my house. I never had been presented to him; but, moreover, as I am very secure of never being suspected to pay my court for interest, and certainly never seek royal personages, I always pique myself, when thrown in their way, upon showing that I know I am nobody, and know the distance between them and me: this I take to be common sense, and do not repent of my behaviour. If I were a grandee and in place, I would not, like the late Duchess of Northumberland, jig after them, calling them my master and my mistress. I think, if I were their servant, I would as little, like the same Grace, parade before the Queen with more footmen than her Majesty. *That* was impertinent.

I am sorry, for the third time of this letter, that I have no new village anecdotes to send your Ladyship, since they divert you for a moment. I have one, but some months old. Lady Charleville, my neighbour, told me three months ago, that, having some company with her, one of them had been to see Strawberry. "Pray," said another, "who is that Mr. Walpole?" "Lord!" cried a third, "don't you know the great epicure, Mr. Walpole?" "Pho!" said the first, "great epicure! you mean the antiquarian." There, Madam, surely this anecdote may take its place in the chapter of local fame. If I have picked up no recent anecdotes on our Common, I have made a much more, to me, precious acquisition. It is the acquaintance of two young ladies of the name of Berry,[1] whom I first

[1] Mary Berry, born March, 1763, died November, 1852, and Agnes Berry, born May, 1764, died January, 1852. They were sisters, and for sixty years lived in the

saw last winter, and who accidentally took a house here with their father for this season. Their story is singular enough to entertain you. The grandfather, a Scot, had a large estate in his own country, 5000*l.* a year it is said; and a circumstance I shall tell you makes it probable. The eldest son married for love a woman with no fortune. The old man was enraged and would not see him. The wife died and left these two young ladies. Their grandfather wished for an heir male, and pressed the widower to re-marry, but could not prevail; the son declaring he would consecrate himself to his daughters and their education. The old man did not break with him again, but much worse, totally disinherited him, and left all to his second son, who very handsomely gave up 800*l.* a year to his elder brother. Mr. Berry has since carried his daughters for two or three years to France and Italy, and they are returned the best-informed and the most perfect creatures I ever saw at their age. They are exceedingly sensible, entirely natural and unaffected, frank, and, being qualified to talk on any subject, nothing is so easy and agreeable as their conversation—not more apposite than their answers and observations. The eldest, I discovered by chance, understands Latin and is a perfect Frenchwoman in her language. The younger draws charmingly, and has copied admirably Lady Di's gipsies, which I lent, though for the first time of her attempting colours. They are of pleasing figures; Mary, the eldest, sweet, with fine dark eyes, that are very lively when she speaks, with a symmetry of face that is the more interesting from being pale; Agnes, the younger, has an agreeable sensible countenance, hardly to be called handsome, but almost. She is less animated than Mary, but seems, out of deference to her sister, to speak seldomer, for they dote on each other, and Mary is always praising her sister's talents. I must even tell you they dress within the bounds of fashion, though fashionably; but without the excrescences and balconies with which modern hoydens overwhelm and barricade their persons. In short, good sense, information, simplicity, and ease characterise the Berrys; and this is not particularly mine, who am apt to be prejudiced, but the universal voice of all who know them. The first night I met them I would not be acquainted with them,

very best of London society. They died unmarried, and are buried in one grave in Petersham churchyard in Twickenhamshire—"amidst scenes," as the inscription on their grave sets forth, "which in life they had frequented and loved." For the "amusement" of these ladies Walpole wrote his most delightful "Reminiscences."—CUNNINGHAM.

having heard so much in their praise that I concluded they would be all pretension. The second time, in a very small company, I sat next to Mary, and found her an angel both inside and out. Now I do not know which I like best, except Mary's face, which is formed for a sentimental novel, but is ten times fitter for a fifty times better thing, genteel comedy. This delightful family comes to me almost every Sunday evening, as our region is too *proclamatory* to play at cards on the seventh day. I do not care a straw for cards, but I do disapprove of this partiality to the youngest child of the week; while the other poor six days are treated as if they had no souls to save. I forgot to tell you that Mr. Berry is a little merry man with a round face, and you would not suspect him of so much feeling and attachment. I make no excuse for such minute details; for, if your Ladyship insists on hearing the humours of my district, you must for once indulge me with sending you two pearls that I found in my path.

2450. TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.[1]

DEAR SIR: *Strawberry Hill, Oct.* 15, 1788.

I AM rather sorry to hear that you are going to be the editor of *another's* work, who are so infinitely better employed when composing yourself. However, as it will be on a branch of *virtu* that I love, I comfort myself, from your taste and accuracy, that it will be better executed than by any one else.

I will execute your commissions, but you must give me a little time. The gout has lamed my fingers, and I cannot use them much at a time; and I doubt it has made me a little indolent too. Age, you may be sure, has not improved my sight, and Vertue's MSS. are not only a heap of immethodic confusion, but are written in so very diminutive a hand that, many years ago, when I collected my 'Anecdotes' from them, and had very strong eyes, I was often forced to use a magnifying-glass. Should you be impatient, will you come and search those MSS. yourself? Next, will you come next Sunday hither, and pass the whole day, if you please, in the examination? I do not recollect three medals of my father. One I think was struck by Natter, who was much patronised by my brother, Sir Edward, and who also engraved two or three seals of Sir Robert's head. The consular figure on the reverse of the medal I mean was

[1] Now first collected.—CUNNINGHAM.

intended for Cicero, but I believe was copied from a statue belonging to the late Earl of Leicester, and which, if I do not mistake at this distance of time, is called Lucius Antonius. I do not know that any medal of my father was struck on any particular occasion. That I mention, and Dassier's were honourary, as of a considerable person; and his being Prime Minister might have a little share in the compliment. Of Dassier I know no more than I have said in the 'Anecdotes of Painting.' I am ignorant who has the medal of the Duchess of Portsmouth; perhaps you might learn of Mr. [Bindley], who lives in Somerset House. He had a great collection of modern medals, but sold them. Perhaps the Duke of Devonshire has the medal in question; you might learn of Dr. Lort, or I can ask him. Are there no modern medals in Dr. Hunter's collection? These are all the answers I am ready to give to your queries at present.

Yours most sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE

2451. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 19, 1788.

IT stands me upon, Madam, to hurry my answer, when I have to thank you for your very pretty and very flattering poetry. Little did I think that my two Straw Berries would prove Muses at Farming-Woods. I sent your Ladyship an account of them from absolute dearth of subjects, when you had commanded me to write again, and when I had done so, I repented, and thought you would laugh at me in your mind's mouth, for troubling you with an idle description of two girls with whom I have happened to get acquainted. Luckily, your Ladyship and our Lord were, at that moment, full as much a man and woman of the woods as any Marquis in Christendom; and, as you are there still, I shall venture to proceed, and send you, not an adequate return (as far as my part goes) for your verses but some of *les amusemens des eaux du Strawberri,* but beseech that they may go no farther, for trifles that *égayent* a little private society, are ridiculous, if they get abroad, especially from a septuagenary rhymer.

The Berrys were to come and see my printing-press. I recollected my gallantry of former days, and they found these stanzas ready set:—

To Mary's lips has ancient Rome
Her purest language taught,
And from the modern city-home
Agnes its pencil brought.

Rome's ancient Horace sweetly chants
Such maids with lyric fire;
Albion's old Horace sings nor paints—
He only can admire.

Still would his press their fame record,
So amiable the pair is!
But, ah! how vain to think his word
Can add a straw to Berrys!

The next morning, the Latian nymph sent me these lines:—

Had Rome's famed Horace thus addrest
His Lydia or his Lyce,
He had ne'er so oft complain'd their breast
To him was cold and icy.

But had they sought their joy to explain,
Or praise their generous bard,
Perhaps, like me, they had tried in vain,
And felt the task too hard.

I will now quit my pretty natural new acquaintance, to utter my wonder (for wonder I do at this novel *équipée*, though accustomed to so many of her vagaries) of a former poetic *connoissance*, Lady C——. One is apt to cry, on hearing any eccentric exploit, "Oh, she is mad!" but surely the packet to Blenheim, and the *two* proposals, considering all circumstances, were produced by the full of the moon. Indeed, these *coups de lune* come thick and fast. But last week another of her projects came to my knowledge; I do not think myself at liberty to mention it yet, though it will be no secret; but you will allow, Madam, that *I* have good reason not to be the first to divulge it. When you hear it, I will tell you more concerning it.

Lady Tweeddale, between fondness and enormous thrift, really did starve her children; but she is strangely foolish, and then what can one say more?

George [Selwyn] is returned to Richmond, and diverted me prodigiously. I had foretold that he would bottle up some relict from the royal visit, but, as he has more wit than I have prophetic spirit, his label to a certain *patera* of *La Reine boit* far outwent my imagination; I suppose he told it to Lord Ossory, or showed it to him.

I have been entertained, too, by a visit of Lord Leicester to Penshurst, from Tunbridge. As the former had belonged to usurpers of his title, of which he had been wronged from the era of the Conquest, I should not have thought he would have deigned to enter it. Oh! but he did; ay, and fell in love with, and wants to purchase it. In the mansion he found a helmet, and put it on, but, unfortunately, it had been made for some paladin whose head was

not of the exact standard that a genuine Earl of Leicester's should be, and in doffing it, he almost tore one of his ears off. I am persuaded he tried it with the intention of wearing it at the next coronation, for, when he was but two-and-twenty, he called on me one morning, and told me he proposed to claim the championry of England, being descended from the eldest daughter of Ralph de Basset, who was champion before the Flood, or before the Conquest, I forget which, whereas the Dymocks come only from the second, and he added, "I did put in my claim at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth." A gentleman who was with me, and who did not understand the heraldic tongue, hearing such a declaration from a very young man, stared, and thought he was gone raving mad, and I, who did understand him, am still not clear that the gentleman was in the wrong.

As you allow me to fill my letters with any scraps I can amass, I will tell your Ladyship how I was struck lately by a sentence of a negro. I was at Kingston, with the sisters of Lord Milford, who are my relations, and who have lately lost their very aged mother. They have a favourite black, who has lived with them a great many years, and is remarkably sensible. To amuse Lady Phillips under a long illness, they had read to her the account of the Pelew Islands. Somebody happened to say we were sending, or have just sent, a ship thither; the black, who was in the room, exclaimed, "Then there is an end of their happiness!" What a satire on Europe!

A propos to scraps and fragments, Madam; part of the 'Mémoires de St. Simon,' which I have long thirsted to see, is published, but has not yet arrived here. Mrs. Damer could get but one copy at Paris, and I have only had a glimpse of one volume out of three, but, even there, I found at least two of Voltaire's most remarkable anecdotes.

The Duc de St. Simon was a favourite of the Regent, but dying, his 'Mémoires' were seized, and locked up at Versailles in the *depôt de papiers*. The Duc de Choiseul, *qui osoit tout*, had a copy taken, and the Duchess lent it to Madame du Deffand, who made her promise I should see it at my next visit; but the Duc's fall intervened, and Madame de Grammont persuaded him it would be dangerous to let it be known then that he had a copy, and I could not blame her. Since that, the Duchesse d'Anville saw, probably, the same copy, and made extracts, as others have from that or the original. I am not sure that the whole is public, or will be, but a good deal is something. Finis of my scraps and paper.

2452. TO THOMAS HOLCROFT, ESQ.[1]

Berkeley Square, Nov. 28, 1788.

The civilities, Sir, which you are pleased to say you received from me at Strawberry Hill, were no more than were due to any gentleman, and certainly did not deserve such acknowledgment as you have made; and I should be ashamed of your thanking me so much, if the agreeable manner in which you have greatly overpaid them by the present of your Works, did not make me easily swallow my shame, though it will not dispense me from assuring you how much I am obliged to you. I shall read them with pleasure as soon as I am settled in town. Just at present, I live between town and country, and should not have leisure but to read them by snatches. It is for this reason that if you are not in haste for it, I shall beg leave to keep your manuscript comedy till I can peruse it with proper attention. If you should want it soon, I will return it and ask for it again, for it would be unjust to the merit of your works to run through them too rapidly.

I am, Sir,
Your obliged and obedient humble Servant,
H. Walpole.

2453. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 3, 1788.

I came to town but yesterday at two o'clock, Madam, when I found your Ladyship's letter. I would have answered it directly, but so many persons came in, it was impossible.

You attributed my late silence, Madam, to the right, at least to the chief cause. Madness is too unpleasant a subject to me who have undergone so much from it in my nephew's case. I heartily pity all afflicted with, or related to it.

It was, besides, too serious a topic to handle, especially under such perfect ignorance as mine. I have not been in town but once or twice for a night or two. At Twickenham I could hear nothing but the strangest incoherent accounts. When here, the assertions were more positive, yet only more discordant; and I saw nobody whose authority I could think better than from second or third hands: and

[1] Now first collected. From 'Memoirs of the late Thomas Holcroft,' 3 vols. 12mo, 1816.—Cunningham.

I did not choose to invalidate them more, as I should do by even repeating them and removing them still farther from a source that might not be pure.

Things now draw to a crisis, and every point will be public, worth knowing certainly, for the events will concern everybody, and indifference would be affected at a moment so new. I, though so old, and as little interested as any individual can be, do not pretend to be incurious. Every *eighty-eight* seems to be a favourite period with fate; and when the club that had recourse to Queen Elizabeth's 88, chose to go two hundred years back for a companion to the Revolution, they little thought that if they had waited a month, they would have an era of their own to the purpose.

With such food for reflection or anticipation, one can be in no want of matter: but I am too ancient to tap what may almost be called a new reign, and of which I am not likely to see much. To penetration I never pretended; nor, to say truth, much believe in, for this reason—the more intuitive any man's head, the wiser he is deemed: now a wise man only calculates from probabilities; he does not condescend (nor would be the shrewder for it) to estimate chance and follies, which decide oftener than probability does. My foresight, if I give it the rein, would not prognosticate much felicity to the nation from so unexpected a calamity, because I should not take uncertainty for a stable of foundation, and hopes and fears do not form an horizon of tranquillity. *Interregnums* have seldom produced halcyon days; yet I no more depend on historic precedent than I do on sagacious foresight. I do not know that there is a grain of good sense in all the labyrinth of speculation in which I could wander, except in my steady opinion of our being exceedingly fortunate in the present embarrassed situation of France. Monsieur Necker may, for aught I know, be a dexterous financier—but he is no Richelieu—though no bad politician neither, as far as confounding goes, for the roll of questions he proposed to the notables seems to have thrown open the gates to endless controversy and disputation, and to mean to set all the provinces, all their towns, all the nobility, clergy, and people together by the ears, before they can settle who shall be *les Etats;* and thus he may convert a rebellion into a civil war, which may save the prerogative at the expense of the revenue, which one should have thought would rather have been his object to procure and settle. That is his affair—it is ours, whichever way they are embroiled. To me it is private comfort, that all the Machiavels and Machiavellesses of the present age, who have sown

war, have only reaped perplexity, disgrace, and discomfiture. France *bouleversed* Holland and was foiled: Cæsar has been baffled by the Turks he despised: Semiramis has drawn Sweden and Poland on her shoulders: and Sweden is in danger at home. *Tant mieux, tant mieux.*

Lord Ossory, no doubt, will come, Madam, and satisfy your curiosity, if you can be content to wait for the echo, which would surprise me. One always thinks, when reading of any memorable period, how one should like to have lived at the time. Surely so novel a crisis as the present is of that complexion. Even if we are temperate, it will be a singular moment. It certainly is a grave one!

2454. TO LADY CRAVEN.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 11, 1788.

It is agreeable to your Ladyship's usual goodness to honour me with another letter; and I may say, to your equity too, after I had proved to Monsieur Mercier, by the list of dates of my letters, that it was not mine, but the post's fault, that you did not receive one that I had the honour of writing to you above a year ago. Not, Madam, that I could wonder if you had the prudence to drop a correspondence with an old superannuated man; who, conscious of his decay, has had the decency of not troubling with his dotages persons of not near your Ladyship's youth and vivacity. I have long been of opinion that few persons know *when* to die; I am not so English as to mean when to despatch themselves—no, but when to go out of the world. I have usually applied this opinion to those who have made a considerable figure; and, consequently, it was not adapted to myself. Yet even we cyphers ought not to fatigue the public scene when we are become lumber. Thus, being quite out of the question, I will explain my maxim, which is the more wholesome, the higher it is addressed. My opinion, then, is, that when any personage has shone as much as is possible in his or her best walk, (and, not to repeat both genders every minute, I will use the male as the common of the two,) he should take up his Strulbrugism, and be heard of no more. Instances will be still more explanatory. Voltaire ought to have pretended to die after Alzire, Mahomet, and Semiramis, and not have produced his wretched last pieces: Lord Chatham should have closed his political career with his immortal war: and how weak was Garrick, when he had quitted

the stage, to limp after the tatters of fame by writing and reading pitiful poems; and even by *sitting* to read plays which he had acted with such fire and energy! We have another example in Mr. Anstey; who, if he had a friend upon earth, would have been obliged to him for being knocked on the head, the moment he had published the *first* edition of the 'Bath Guide;' for, even in the second, he had exhausted his whole stock of inspiration, and has never written anything tolerable since. When such unequal authors print their works together, one may apply in a new light the old hacked simile of Mezentius, who tied together the living and the dead.

We have just received the works of an Author [Frederick the Great], from whom I find I am to receive much less entertainment than I expected, because I shall have much less to read than I intended. His 'Memoirs,' I am told, are almost wholly military; which, therefore, I shall not read: and his poetry, I am sure, I shall not look at, because I should not understand it. What I saw of it formerly convinced me, that he would not have been a poet, even if he had written in his own language; and, though I do not understand German, I am told it is a fine language: and I can easily believe that any tongue (not excepting our old barbarous Saxon, which, a bit of an antiquary as I am, I abhor,) is more harmonious than French. It was curious absurdity, therefore, to pitch on the most unpoetic language in Europe, the most barren, and the most clogged with difficulties. I have heard Russian and Polish sung, and both sounded musical; but, to abandon one's own tongue, and not adopt Italian, that is even sweeter, and softer, and more copious, than the Latin, was a want of taste that I should think could not be applauded even by a Frenchman born in Provence. But what a language is the French, which measures verses by feet that never are to be pronounced; which is the case wherever the mute *e* is found! What poverty of various sounds for rhyme, when, lest similar cadences should too often occur, their mechanic bards are obliged to marry masculine and feminine terminations as alternately as the black and white squares of a chess-board? Nay, will you believe me, Madam,—yes, you will, for you may convince your own eyes,—that a scene of 'Zaire' begins with three of the most nasal adverbs that ever snorted together in a breath? *Enfin, donc, desormais*, are the culprits in question. *Enfin donc*, need I tell your Ladyship, that the author I alluded to at the beginning of this long tirade is the late King of Prussia?

I am conscious that I have taken a little liberty when I excommunicate a tongue in which your Ladyship has condescended to write; but I only condemn it for verse and pieces of eloquence, of which I thought it alike incapable, till I read Rousseau of Geneva. It is a most sociable language, and charming for narrative and epistles. Yet, write as well as you will in it, you must be liable to express yourself better in the speech natural to you; and your own country has a right to understand all your works, and is jealous of their not being as perfect as you could make them. Is it not more creditable to be translated into a foreign language than into your own? and will it not vex you to hear the translation taken for the original, and to find vulgarisms that you could not have committed yourself? But I have done, and will release you, Madam; only observing, that you flatter me with a vain hope, when you tell me you shall return to England some time or other. Where will that time be for me? and when it arrives, shall I not be somewhere else?

I do not pretend to send your Ladyship English news, nor to tell you of English literature. You must before this time have heard of the dismal state into which our chief [King George III.] personage is fallen! That consideration absorbs all others. The two Houses are going to settle some intermediate succedaneum; and *the obvious one*, no doubt, will be fixed on.

2455. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 26, 1788.

I MUST have been very presumptuous, Madam, had I expected your Ladyship to bestow on me any minutes of the very few hours you passed in town—indeed I was not so unreasonable. Your dentist, I hope, was successfully employed.

I am by no means expert, Madam, at explaining obscurities. The passage you have sent me is probably incorrectly printed, if not too carelessly written. It perhaps alludes to Mahomet's first wife, Cadesha, who became a proselyte to his revelations, and propagated his gospel. She certainly bore to him none but allegoric progeny. Or may *the she wolf* mean Mahomet's own enthusiasm? I only guess because you bid me—not from ambition of making sense out of what I do not understand.

I have been confined to my house for some days by the worst cold

and cough I ever had in my days. I treat it as ill as possible, and do not give it a morsel; still it will not leave me. In revenge it will not let me speak. My whole amusement, a woful one, has been dipping into three volumes of the King of Prussia's letters to Voltaire. Worse stuff did I never behold! so pedantic, so tiresomely flattering, so utterly void of variety, with Apollon, Milton, and Newton in every page, and such bushels of vile verses—oh! I borrowed and shall return them. It is to be hoped his 'Memoirs' will make amends—but General Conway is reading them himself, and could only lend me the correspondence.

Lord Beauchamp has just called on me, and says the King of Spain is dead. I should be as glad to read his letters as those of his "*Soi-disant Philosophe de Sans Souci.*" What contradictions are we, great mortals and little! To be the rival of Alexander, and the *singe* of the Marquis d'Argens and French academicians!

I will not plead my cold for the shortness of this, Madam, yet I assure you it makes it troublesome even to write; but I really know nothing more than I have told you, not even of politics (which you choose to avoid), and which I never seek, and a dispute full as little on any subject. Politics are to me but objects of entertainment in their turn, like other transient occurrences; but serious follies if they affect the good humour of the person no ways concerned in them. It would be droll indeed if your Ladyship and I should grow warm about them.

2456. TO THE MISS BERRYS.[1]

February 2, 17—71[2] [1789].

I AM sorry, in the sense of that word before it meant, like a Hebrew word, glad or sorry, that I am engaged this evening; and I am at your command on Tuesday, as it is always my inclination to be. It is a misfortune that words are become so much the current coin of society, that, like King William's shillings, they have no impression left; they are so smooth, that they mark no more to whom they first belonged than to whom they do belong, and are not

[1] This is the first of the series of letters addressed by Mr. Walpole to Miss Mary and Miss Agnes Berry, and now first published [1840] from the originals in their possession.—WRIGHT. Walpole's "Reminiscences," written to and for the Miss Berrys, are dated a month earlier, 13th January, 1789.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] The date is thus put, alluding to his age, which, in 1789, was seventy-one.—M. B.

worth even the twelvepence into which they may be changed: but if they mean too little, they may seem to mean too much too, especially when an old man (who is often synonymous for a miser) parts with them. I am afraid of protesting how much I delight in your society, lest I should seem to affect being gallant; but if two negatives make an affirmative, why may not two ridicules compose one piece of sense? and therefore, as I am in love with you both, I trust it is a proof of the good sense of your devoted,

H. WALPOLE.

2457. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 6, 1789.

I AM sure, Madam, the various reasons of my silence will appear valid to you. For six weeks I was confined by the worst cold and cough that I ever had in my life, and so shattered and oppressed, that I suspected the latter at least would fix for its life and mine, like an owl that resides and hoots in an old ruin—but it is gone. Then came the misfortune of Miss Campbell's death, and I was shut up with Mr. Conway and Lady Aylesbury. He bore it the worst of the two at first, but has conquered himself; and she is better within these two days.

For news I heard not a tittle but political, and Œdipus himself could not have guessed what was true. Everybody that called on me, asserted something or other on *the best authority*, and every other body that came, contradicted his predecessor as positively on as good authority; and so between two stools my faith remained just where it was. Thus I could not report anything that was *party* per pale, truth and falsehood, when I could not blazon either in its true colours—were all these embargoes not sufficient? would not you yourself, Madam, impose silence on anybody that had a grain of modesty left, when you tell me you have been reading old letters of mine to your daughters and niece? But alas! it is too late to blush through so many wrinkles! nay, this very hour inflicts threefold penance on me! viz., what you have said; Bell's republication; and Lady Craven's 'Travels,' where I make one of the figurants. In truth, and in very sober truth, I constantly lament having been born with a propensity to writing, and still worse to publishing! How many monuments of my folly will survive me! One comfort is, that half the world seems to be as foolish as I have been, and

eyes will not be born in plenty enough to read a thousandth part of what each year produces: *Nos numeri sumus*, and *I* shall be no more distinguished than my spare form would be in a living multitude.

For 'Bell's Edition,' I only am sorry for it as a republication; my epistle is the worst poem in the volume, so I cannot complain of my company. I had no business to write verses, for I was not born a poet, whatever my propensities were; but Bell is a rascal, who at least this way will get nothing by me. He cheated me literally of above 500*l.* on my last volume of the 'Anecdotes of Painting,' and now sets me at defiance because he found I would not arrest him.

Lady Craven's 'Travels' I received from Robson two hours ago. Dodsley brought the MS. to me before I came to town, but I positively refused to open it, though he told me my name was mentioned in it several times; but I was conscious how grievous it would be to her family and poor daughters, and therefore persisted in having nothing to do with it. I own I have now impatiently cut the leaves in search of my own name, and am delighted on finding it there but thrice, and only by the initial letter. When I have the honour of seeing your Ladyship, I can tell you many collateral circumstances; but I will not put them on paper. I fear she may come to wish, or should, that *she* had not been born with a propensity to writing.

These questions I have answered readily, Madam: but about Calonne and La Motte I know nothing. *They* are a species of outlaws for which I have no taste, nor for their compeeress, Madlle D'Eon.

I can as little satisfy your Ladyship about the title of Mr. Hayley's fourth play,[1] which I totally forget. I remember the scene lay at Gibraltar, and that the subject was if possible more disgusting than that of the 'Mysterious Mother;' and having no self-love for the deformed offspring of other people, I never opened the volume a second time.

Mr. Fox, I am told, is better, but I have seen nobody that is particularly informed; though my house is well situated as a coffee-house, and I very seldom stir from the bar in a morning, I have no intelligence but from those who accidentally drop in, consequently my Gazette is commonly striped of two colours, as opposite as black

[1] 'Marcella,' a tragedy, in three acts, founded upon an abominable story which Richardson had recommended to Young.—CUNNINGHAM.

and white, and, if repeated, would sound like the *cross-readings* from newspapers.[1] Truth is said to lie at the bottom of a well, to which I am sure at present there are two buckets, which clash so much, that each brings up as much mud as pure grain. If I do not sift them, at least I do not retail one for the other.

2458. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 10, 1789

A TRUCE, my good Lady, with my perfections! indeed I have none, and when you compliment me with any praises, you only make me cry, "Lord, have mercy, can this mean *me!*" If you provoke me, I will write such a just satire on myself, that you shall be ashamed of ever saying a civil thing to me again. Nay, how the deuce should I know myself, when you tell me of my candour; I, who have ever allowed that I am the most prejudiced of mankind! But do not mistake, Madam; it is not being candid, to have lived to be grown indifferent, which is the best chance that common sense has for obtaining the casting vote in one's own privy council. I must again, too, remonstrate against your showing my letters; ay for your own sake, if you desire they should be natural, and unreserved. Is it possible to be unaffected, when one knows one is to undergo an ordeal of eyes? Whatever interferes with one's writing, as if *tête-à-tête* with one's correspondent, must destroy the ease of letters; and who will dare to write any uppermost folly in the face of half-a-dozen inquisitors?

Your Ladyship is used to, and has tolerated my fooleries, and to encourage me to continue them, you tell me Lord Holland loves nonsense; but ah! Madam, the nonsense of one age is not the nonsense of another age! I remember the late Lord Leicester,[2] [died 1759] who had formed a *galimatias* that was much to the taste of his contemporaries. He retired to Holkham for a few years, returned to town and to White's; a new generation was come forth, who stared and concluded he was superannuated; and he was forced to pack up his obsolete phrases and antiquated humour and decamp again, to rail at the dulness of the young men. Even wit has its modes on which its success depends, as Sir W. Temple observes of the old Earl of Norwich [Goring]; and who knows but Lord

[1] See vol. v. p. 30.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] Used before in a letter to Mann, vol. viii. p. 270.—CUNNINGHAM.

Brudenel may cease to be laughed at in a future reign! Diogenes Laertius records many witticisms of the old philosophers, which would not raise a smile now in the House of Commons, where our country gentlemen are no niggards of horse laughs at miserable jokes. If therefore you hold out readers to me, it will be such a *terrorem*, that I shall grow as stiff and formal as her Grace my neighbour Beaufort; begin *with hoping you are well*, and conclude with *compliments to your fireside and all friends*, and tell you as news the prices of commodities at Bear Key.

If you had not so dosed me, Madam, with high-flown panegyric, I doubt I should have been flattered by Lord Holland's approbation; but now I dare not listen to the charmer, charm he ever so wisely; nay, I am almost afraid of commending his very pretty easy verses, lest I should seem to connive at a mart of flattery. I have one set of 'Royal and Noble Authors' left, which shall be at his Lordship's command when you tell me whither to direct them.

I am a little surprised, I confess, at your Ladyship's finding it laborious to finish Mr. Gibbon, especially the last volume, which I own, too, delighted me the most—perhaps because I was best acquainted with the subjects of it. In the other volumes I was a little confounded by his leaping backwards and forwards, and I could not recollect all those *fainéant* Emperors of Constantinople, who come again and again, like the same ships in a moving picture. How he could traverse such acres of ill-written histories, even to collect such a great work, astonishes me.

I am reading as multifarious a collection, but by no means with the same alacrity, the 'Anacharsis' of the Abbé Barthelemy, four most corpulent quartos, into which he has amassed, and indeed very ingeniously arranged, every passage I believe (for aught I know) that is extant in any Greek or Latin author, which gives any account of Greece and all and every part of it; but, alas! I have not yet waded through the second volume, a sure sign that the appetite of my eyes is decayed. I can read now but for amusement. It is not at all necessary to improve oneself for the next world, especially as one's knowledge will probably not prove standard there. The Abbé is besides a little too partial to the Grecian accounts of their own virtues; and as M. Pauw and Dr. Gillies have lately unhinged their scale of merits, a rehabilitation is no business of mine.

I must not finish without thanking your Ladyship for sending me *Les Amusemens des Eaux d'Ampthill:* I could return nothing but accounts of political hostilities, in which I hear our Amazons take a

very considerable part. Lady Craven, I believe, will scarce make the impression that might be expected from so rash a publication, as she has not a word on the present crisis.

P.S. I am dull, and cannot guess the charades.

2459. TO SIR HORACE MANN.[1]

Berkeley Square, Feb. 12, 1789.

I now do believe that the King is coming to *him*self: not in the language of the courtiers, to his senses—but from their proof, viz., that he is returned to his *what! what! what!* which he used to prefix to every sentence, and which is coming to his nonsense. I am corroborated in this opinion by his having said much more sensible things in his lunacy, than he did when he was reckoned sane, which I do not believe he has been for some years.

Well! now, how will this new change of scene operate? I fancy if anyone could win access to him, who would tell him the truth, he would be as little pleased with his Queen, and his or her Pitt, as they will take care he shall be with his sons. Would he admire the degradation of his family in the person of all the Princes? or with the tripartite division of Royalty between the Queen, the Prince, and Mr. Pitt, which I call a *Trinity in disunity?* Will he be charmed with the Queen's admission to power, which he never imparted to her? Will he like the discovery of his vast private hoard? Will he be quite satisfied with the codicil to his Will, which she surreptitiously obtained from him in his frenzy *in the first agony of her grief?* How will he digest that discovery of his treasure, which will not diffuse great compassion when he shall next ask a payment of his pretended debts? Before his madness he was indisposed towards Pitt; will he be better pleased with him for his new dictatorial presumption?

Turn to the next page—to Ireland. They have chosen for themselves, it is believed, a Regent without restrictions, in scorn of the Parliament of England, and in order further to assert their independence. Will they recede? especially when their courtiers have flown in the face of our domineering Minister? I do not think they

[1] Now first published. The Sir Horace of this letter was the nephew of Walpole's former correspondent.—CUNNINGHAM.

will. They may receive the King again on his recovery; but they have united interests with the Prince, and act in league with him, that he may pledge himself to them more deeply in future at least; they will never again acknowledge any superiority in our Parliament, but rather act in contradistinction.

Feb. 22*nd.*

The person who was to have brought you this was prevented leaving town, and therefore I did not finish my letter; but I believe I shall have another opportunity of sending, and therefore I will make it ready.

Much has happened this last week. The Prince is Regent of Ireland without limitations—a great point for his character; for Europe will now see that it was a faction which fettered him here, and not his unpopularity, for then would not he have been as much distasted in Ireland? Indeed, their own Attorney-General made way for him by opposing on the most injudicious of all pleas, that it would be necessary before he could be Regent there, to set the *Great Seal of England* to the act! How could the fool imagine, that when that phantom had been invented here, it would not be equally easy for the Irish to invent a parallel phantom of their own? But though this compliment is most grateful to the Prince at present, he will probably find hereafter that he has in effect lost Ireland, who meant more to emancipate themselves from this country than to compliment the Prince or contradict the English ministerial faction.

What will be the consequence of that rapid turn in Ireland, even immediately, who can tell? for the King is called recovered, and the English Regency is suspended, with fresh and grievous insults to the Prince, who with the Duke of York are violently hindered by the Queen from even seeing their father, though she and their sisters play at cards with him in an evening; and that the Chancellor was with him for an hour and three quarters on the 19th.

Under colour of what new phantom her Majesty, the Chancellor, and Pitt will assume the Government, we shall know in two or three days; for I do not suppose they will produce the King instantly, at the risk of oversetting his head again, though they seem half as mad as he, and capable of any violent act to maintain themselves. And so much the better: I do not wish them temperate; and it looks as if people never were so in minorities

and incapacities of their kings. The Prince set out as indiscreetly as Pitt.

Of the event I am very glad; it saves the Prince and the Opposition from the rashness of changing the Administration on so precarious and shackled a tenure, and it saves them too from the expense of re-elections. If the King recovers, they are but where they were, but with the advantage of having the Prince and Duke of York rooted in aversion to the Ministers, and most unlikely to be governed by the Queen. If the King relapses, the Opposition stock will rise; though in the mean time I do not doubt but the nation will grow drunk with the loyalty of rejoicing, for kings grow popular by whatever way they lose their heads. Still, whatever eccentricity he attempts, it will be imputed to his deranged understanding. And, however even Lord Hawkesbury[1] may meditate the darkest mischiefs under the new fund of pity and loyalty, he will *not* be for extending the prerogative, which must devolve (on any accident to the King) on the Prince, Duke of York, or some of the Princes, who will all be linked in a common cause with their brothers, who have been so grossly affronted; and Prince William, the third, particularly so by the last cause of hindering his peerage while abroad.[2] The King's recovery before the Regency Act was passed will be another great advantage to the Prince; his hands would have been so shackled, that he could not have found places for half the expectants, who will now impute their disappointments to the King's amendment, and not to the Prince.

Monday, 24th.

The King has seen the Prince [of Wales], and received him kindly, but the Queen was present. Iron Pluto (as Burke called the Chancellor) wept again when with the King; but what is much more remarkable, his Majesty has not asked for Pitt, and did abuse him constantly during his frenzy. The Chancellor certainly did not put him in mind of Pitt, whom he detests; so there is a pretty portion of hatred to be quaffed amongst them! and swallowed, if they can; yet *aurum potabile* will make it sit on their stomachs.

[1] Charles Jenkinson, first Lord Hawkesbury, and first Earl of Liverpool: died 1808.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] Prince William (afterwards William IV.), was created Duke of Clarence, May 20, 1789—a few months after the date of this letter.—CUNNINGHAM.

2460. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 24, 1789.

THE character that has been given to you of the Abbé's book is very just, and it is extremely well described by *a Mosaic composed all of bits of truth;* but alas! the pavement is a fiction, and not slippery enough to make me slide over it: it is, as Mrs. Damer says, a vision, a dream about truths; in short, it is an excellent work for a man of twenty-five, just fresh from the classics, and would range them most compendiously in his head, and he would know where to find any parcel he should want on occasion; but for me, I have not been able to wade to the end of the second volume. I cannot gulp again the reveries of the old philosophers on the origin of the world, and still less the foolish romances of Herodotus, such as that of the patriotic courtier who cut off his own nose and ears in order to betray Babylon to Darius. *Iron tears may fall down Pluto's cheek* when he sees Nebuchadnezzar come to himself; yet even that I should not believe at the distance of two thousand years! Then, having just read Dr. Gillies and Mr. Pauw, I cannot for the life of me admire the Lacedemonians again, nor listen gravely to the legend of Lycurgus, when Mr. Pauw has proved it very doubtful whether any such personage existed; if there did, he only refined savages into greater barbarism. I will tell your Ladyship an additional observation that I made just as I broke off with 'Anacharsis.' We are told that Lycurgus allowed theft and enjoined community of goods. I beg to know where was the use of stealing where there was no individual property? Does stealth consist in filching what is your own as much as any other man's? It would be like Mr. Cumberland, who steals from himself.

Wednesday.

I had written thus far yesterday morning in answer to a scrap that I had just received from your Ladyship with the query about 'Anacharsis,' and then I had visits till three, and then I was obliged to dress and go and leave my name for the houses of Edgcumbe and Hobart on their union. When I came home to dinner, I found your longer letter, which had been outstripped by its postscript, and it was then too late to save the post without burning my mouth from haste, for I am so antiquated as still to dine at four when I can, though frequently prevented, as many are so good as to call on me

at that hour, because it is too soon for them to go home and dress so early in the morning.

I did not intend to say a syllable on the King's recovery, as I have nothing but the crumbs which I pick up from those who go every morning to receive their daily faith from the Lord of the bedchamber at St. James's. I am still less qualified to answer, when you ask me where is Truth? I reply, how should I know it, even if I could tell where it is? When Pilate asked what it was, I do not find that he was informed. Dr. Beattie may know better, perhaps.[1]

Whatever be the King's case, he is to be pitied: yes, whether he is to be produced, conscious of what has been his situation, or capable of business, yet to be told he must not risk engaging in it, or whether he is to be precipitated back, by undertaking it. Nor is the nation quite undeserving compassion, if it is to be subjected to the freaks of a head that has lost its poise, or to those who insist on reigning for him. With such gleams or phantoms of foresight, I cannot much dissent from your Ladyship's apprehension of storms: yet I will hope we shall realise no old prophecies. What the one you refer to was, I do not at all recollect; but it sounds something like *Nixon's*, an old Cheshire prediction, that I have lived to see revived and stillborn again two or three times, as often as the Jacobites were meditating or reviving rebellion. I heard it first when I was at school, and it frightened me terribly. We were to swim in blood up to our chins in the time of George the son of George; which circumstance looked exceedingly probable; and does again with equal or no more probability. A miller with two thumbs (a wonderfully striking phenomenon, though I do not remember its being specified that both were to be on the same hand, though one devoutly concluded so) was to set all to rights again, and such a marvellous miller was said to exist—but enough of these fooleries. If the cloud bursts, it is most likely to fall on the west, whence the Viceroy has refused to send over the votes of both Houses, offering the Regency to the Prince; and yesterday there was a rumour of his Vice-majesty's being impeached there—which I do not warrant. Nay, I do not know what the English senate is doing, or putting off to-day.

I am sorry my noble authoress's [Lady Craven's] 'Travels' do not please you, Madam; in truth, I fear they will add more to her

[1] Beattie wrote an Essay on Truth.—CUNNINGHAM.

present celebrity than to her future renown. I even doubt whether she would not have been turned into a laurel as soon by running *from* Apollo (which was not her turn), as by running *to* him. You have expressed most happily the greater facility of whiffing gales than of gathering flowers. A box of sumach from Ampthill will be as precious to me as if it came from Serendip.

Of Mirabeau's book I have heard of nobody that has got a copy here yet, but the Dutch minister, and he, the first volume only. The papers to-day say it has been burnt at Paris, which will make it—

> On wings of flames come flying all abroad.

The Duke of York, I am told, is not gently treated in it.

There is another *just* or *unjust* volume that makes its appearance, not composed of milk and honey: the object, Bishop Hurd; the author, Dr. Parr. The vehicle, like his 'Bellendenus,' an old carriage on new wheels. The title, 'Tracts by a Warburtonian.' It is desperately well written; but probably not of the amusing kind to your Ladyship.

I would not interrupt my news, or rather, my replies, and therefore delayed telling you that Tonton is dead, and that I comfort myself: he was grown stone deaf, and very nearly equally blind, and so weak that, the two last days, he could not walk upstairs. Happily, he had not suffered, and died close by my side without a pang or a groan. I have had the satisfaction, for my dear old friend's sake and his own, of having nursed him up, by constant attention, to the age of sixteen, yet always afraid of his surviving me, as it was scarcely possible he could meet a third person who would study his happiness equally. I sent him to Strawberry, and went thither on Sunday to see him buried behind the chapel, near Rosette. I shall miss him greatly, and must not have another dog; I am too old, and should only breed it up to be unhappy, when I am gone. My resource is in two marble kittens that Mrs. Damer has given me, of her own work, and which are so much alive that I talk to them, as I did to poor Tonton! if this is being superannuated, no matter: when dotage can amuse itself, it ceases to be an evil. I fear, my marble playfellows are better adapted to me, than I am to being your Ladyship's correspondent.

P.S. As you wrote on both ends of your cover, I had missed till this moment on putting up your letter, the very kind things you say on Mr. Conway and Lady Aylesbury, which I take as a great

obligation to myself too. He has conquered his concern when nothing happens to strike on it particularly; but Lady A. is not well, and has not yielded to go anywhere but to Mrs. Damer and her brother Lord Frederic; but she sees particular persons at home; and if her health mends, I hope will recover her spirits too—I wish I were as sanguine about my niece, Lady Dysart, who, I fear, is in a decay.

N.B. The nation, like a *paroli* at Faro, is gone to sleep for another week; and as the Ministers have *set on the King*, they will probably win.

2461. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 28, 1789.

You have overwhelmed me with confusion, Madam. I was aware of frequently sending you a sheet full of nonsense, and I did know, too, that your Ladyship kept my letters; and it was the conscience of the latter that made me more ready to continue the former, as I trusted that a multiplicity of follies would provoke yourself or somebody else to throw them all into the fire; but I own I did not suspect that in so few years they would become totally unintelligible even to myself. The letter you have sent me is so far from unravelling what you alluded to, that I have not the smallest recollection of the story, nor of what it referred to. I return it, not as a preservative, but trusting that whoever finds it will conclude that the writer of it, and I fear of many more such rhapsodies, was lightheaded; and if you have patience to read such letters over again, *Ora pro nobis*, for both of us, Madam.

However, having at present a lucid interval, like my betters, and naturally not loving a dispute, I shall agree to all your Ladyship's creeds in waiting. I will believe that Cheltenham water, which is the most violent of all lotions, and stronger than Madeira and Champagne, which so many heads can bear with impunity, may derange the intellects for four months, though it has never overset for four-and-twenty hours the brains of so many thousands as have drunk it for at least these hundred years. I will believe that your Ladyship believes that you admire Mr. Pitt on all occasions, which is not extraordinary, as you are so apt always to think favourably of great politicians; and above all things, I rejoice on the comfort you find in having your husband on one side, and your two

sons on the other, which must harmonise your mind; and methinks you might extend that satisfaction still further. I cannot see the least reason why his Majesty should relapse, even if he should return to Cheltenham next summer, as he told Sir Joseph Banks last Saturday (since his recovery) he intends. I have even more faith in perfect recoveries than his Majesty has, who has often declared he doubted of my nephew's. Bless me, has not my nephew recovered perfectly *twice!* and the last time of his coming to that perfection, did not he, in a week after Dr. Monro had pronounced him sane, give the strongest proof of sound intellects, by marching to Norwich at the head of the Norfolk militia (which the King had commanded me to prevent, and which I could not), and write in the orderly book there, that if the French should land on any part of the coast, the magistrates were to burn the suburbs of that city, which would then be impregnable.

You see, Madam, how accommodating my faith is! It requires still less exertion to fit it to the prognostics in your last. I did then foresee some hurlyburly; and the Marquis of Buckingham seems to have opened a serious sluice; and should he be supported in the imperative mood that was *so judiciously* adopted at the commencement of the American troubles, I should not be surprised if the Irish were to weigh anchor and sail into the Atlantic ocean of independence after the Colonists; and then the son, like his father George Grenville, would have the honour of losing another sovereignty; or like the sage Duc d'Olivares might congratulate his master on a rebellion, which would give him an opportunity of enslaving his own subjects. If all this should happen, pray advertise me in time, Madam, that I may *always admire* the Marquis of Buckingham too.

As you have made me ashamed of my foolish letters, I will add no more to this, but a heap of thanks for the portrait du Prince Allemand; for your kind inquiries about Lady Dysart, who has and deserves her character and my full affection, and who, though much better for this last week, I fear is in a declining state; and for the obliging offer of another dog—but against that I most positively protest. My life is too far wasted and too precarious to embark in any new care. I have such a passion for dogs, that a favourite one is a greater misery than pleasure, and to give me one is to sow me with anxiety. I would as soon adopt Mademoiselle Fagniani.[1]

[1] George Selwyn's adopted daughter, afterwards (1798) Lady Yarmouth. See vol. vii. p. 281.—CUNNINGHAM.

2462. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Monday evening.

The coach did not deliver your Ladyship's obliging note till four o'clock this afternoon, when the post had been gone out three hours, so I could only thank you by to-morrow morning's coach, or you would be set out for Ampthill.

I did, I own, hurt myself pretty much, Madam, but it was a mere muscular bruise. I sent for the apothecary as soon as you were gone, but with my gout*icity* he would not venture to bleed me. He recommended frequent repetitions of arquebusade, which have certainly alleviated the pain, though he thinks it will continue for a few days. As I did not break a rib, I have only lost the two [1] that are gone to Yorkshire.—Your Ladyship's most obliged humble servant.

2463. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Berkeley Square, March 20, 1789.

Mrs. Damer had lent her Madame de la Motte,[2] and I have but this moment recovered it; so you see, I had not forgotten it any more than my engagements to you: nay, were it not ridiculous at my age to use a term so almost run out as *never*, I would add that you will find I *never* can forget you.

I hope you are not engaged this day sevennight, but will allow me to wait on you to Lady Aylesbury, which I will settle with her when I have your answer. I did mention it to her in general, but have no day free before Friday next, except Thursday; when, if there is another illumination, as is threatened, we should neither get thither nor thence; especially not the latter, if the former is impracticable.

Quicquid delirant Reges, plectuntur Achivi.

P.S. I have got a few hairs of Edward the Fourth's *head*, not *beard;* they are of a darkish brown, not auburn.[3]

[1] The Misses Berry.—R. Vernon Smith.

[2] The 'Mémoire Justificatif' of Madame de la Motte, relative to her conduct in the far-famed affair of the necklace.—Wright.

[3] Given by Sir Joseph Banks, and sold at the Strawberry Hill sale for 3*l.* 3*s.*—Cunningham.

2464. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

DEAR MADAM, *Berkeley Square, April* 22, 1789.

As perhaps you have not yet seen the 'Botanic Garden' (which I believe I mentioned to you), I lend it you to read. The poetry, I think, you will allow most admirable; and difficult it was, no doubt. If you are not a naturalist, as well as a poetess, perhaps you will lament that so powerful a talent has been wasted to so little purpose; for where is the use of describing in verse what nobody can understand without a long prosaic explanation of every article? It is still more unfortunate that there is not a symptom of plan in the whole poem. The lady-flowers and their lovers enter in pairs or trios, or &c., as often as the couples in Cassandra, and you are not a whit more interested about one heroine and her swain than about another. The similes are beautiful, fine, and sometimes sublime: and thus the episodes will be better remembered than the mass of the poem itself, which one cannot call *the subject;* for could one call it a subject, if anybody had composed a poem on the matches formerly made in the Fleet, where, as Waitwell says, in 'The Way of the World,' they stood like couples in rows ready to begin a country dance? Still, I flatter myself, you will agree with me that the author is a great poet, and could raise the passions, and possesses all the requisites of the art. I found but a single bad verse: in the last canto one line ends *e'er long*. You will perhaps be surprised at meeting a truffle converted into a nymph, and inhabiting a palace studded with emeralds and rubies like a saloon in the Arabian Nights! I had a more particular motive for sending this poem to *you:* you will find the bard espousing your poor Africans. There is besides, which will please you too, a handsome panegyric on the apostle of humanity, Mr. Howard.[1]

Mrs. Garrick, whom I had the pleasure of meeting in her own box at Mr. Conway's play, gave me a much better account of your health, which delighted me. I am sure, my good friend, you partake of my

[1] "I did not feel," says Miss More in her reply, "so much gratified in reading the poem, marvellous as I think it, as I did at the kindness which led you to think of me when you met with anything which you imagined would give me pleasure. Your strictures, which are as true as if they had no wit in them, served to embellish every page as I went on, and were more intelligible and delightful to me than the scientific annotations in the margin." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 149.—WRIGHT.

joy at the great success of his Comedy. The additional character of the Abbé pleased much: it was added by the advice of the players to enliven it; that is, to stretch the jaws of the pit and galleries. I sighed silently; for it was originally so genteel and of a piece, that I was sorry to have it tumbled by coarse applauses. But this is a secret. I am going to Twickenham for two days on an assignation with the spring, and to avoid the riotous devotion of to-morrow.

A gentleman essayist has printed what he calls some strictures on my 'Royal and Noble Authors,' in revenge for my having spoken irreverently (on Bishop Burnet's authority) of the Earl of Anglesey, who had the honour, it seems, of being the gentleman's grandfather. He asks me, by the way, why it was more ridiculous in the Duke of Newcastle to write his two comedies, than in the Duke of Buckingham to write 'The Rehearsal'? Alas! I know but one reason; which is, that it is less ridiculous to write one excellent comedy, than two very bad ones. Peace be with such answerers! Adieu, my dear Madam! Yours most cordially.

2465. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

April 28, *at night*, 1789.

By my not saying *no* to Thursday, you, I trust, understood that I meant *yes;* and so I do. In the mean time, I send you the most delicious poem upon earth. If you don't know what it is all about, or why, at least you will find glorious similes about everything in the world, and I defy you to discover three bad verses in the whole stack. Dryden was but the prototype of *the Botanic Garden* in his charming 'Flower and Leaf;' and if he had less meaning, it is true he had more plan: and I must own, that his white velvets and green velvets, and rubies and emeralds, were much more virtuous gentlefolks than most of the flowers of the creation, who seem to have no fear of Doctors' Commons before their eyes. This is only the Second Part; for, like my King's eldest daughter in the 'Hieroglyphic Tales,' the First Part is not born yet:—no matter. I can read this over and over again for ever; for though it is so excellent, it is impossible to remember anything so disjointed, except you consider it as a collection of short enchanting poems,—as the Circe at her tremendous develries in a church; the intrigue of the dear nightingale and rose; and the description of Medea; the episode of Mr. Howard, which ends with the most sublime of lines—in short,

all, all; all is the most lovely poetry. And then one sighs, that such profusion of poetry, magnificent and tender, should be thrown away on what neither interests nor instructs, and, with all the pains the notes take to explain, is scarce intelligible.

How strange it is, that a man should have been inspired with such enthusiasm of poetry by poring through a microscope, and peeping through the keyholes of all the seraglios of all the flowers in the universe! I hope his discoveries may leave any impression but of the universal polygamy going on in the vegetable world, where, however, it is more gallant than amongst the human race; for you will find that they are the botanic ladies who keep harems, and not the gentlemen. Still, *I* will maintain that it is much better that we should have two wives than your sex two husbands. So pray don't mind Linnæus and Dr. Darwin; Dr. Madan had ten times more sense. Adieu! Your doubly constant,

THELYPHTHORUS.

2466. TO MRS. CARTER, AT DEAL.[1]

DEAR MADAM, *Berkeley Square, June* 13, 1789.

Dr. Douglas has been so good, at your desire, as to inquire after me, and will let you know that I mend, though slowly, as is very natural at my age, and with my shattered limbs. I cannot, however, content myself, though your kindness would be so, with a mere answer that is satisfactory enough. You must allow me to add my own thanks, as I feel much obliged, and am proud of your thinking me at all deserving to interest your sensibility, though I am not conscious of sufficient merit. I do not mean, however, to misemploy much of your time, which I know is always passed in good works, and usefully. You have, therefore, probably not looked into '—— Travels.'[2] I, who have been almost six weeks lying on a couch, have gone through them. It was said that Addison might have written his without going out of England. By the excessive vulgarisms so plentiful in these volumes, one might suppose the writer had never stirred out of the parish of St. Giles. Her Latin, French, and Italian, too, are so miserably spelt, that she had better have studied her own language before she floundered into other tongues. Her friends plead that she piques herself on writing as she talks: methinks, then, she

[1] Now first collected.—CUNNINGHAM.
[2] Mrs. Piozzi's.—CUNNINGHAM.

should talk as she would write. There are many indiscretions too in her work, of which she will perhaps be told, though B—— is dead.

I shall remove to Twickenham next week, to enjoy my roses at least, since I have lost my lilacs and nightingales. I ought, I know, dear Madam, to beg you would not take the trouble of answering this; but when you have the great good-nature of remembering my gout, how ungrateful it would be to deny myself the pleasure of hearing that you have not suffered much lately by your headaches! I dare not flatter myself that they are cured, for when are constitutional evils quite removed? We, who have intervals, and still more, on whom Providence has showered comforts, even when we are in pain, must recollect what more durable sufferings exist, and how many miserable beings have no fortunes to purchase alleviations. This I speak for myself, who know how far I am from deserving any of the blessings I enjoy. You, my dear Madam, have led a life of virtue, and never forget your duties; it would be strange then if I confounded you with

Your very respectful
And obliged humble servant,
HORACE WALPOLE.

2467. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Tuesday, June 23, 1789.

I AM not a little disappointed and mortified at the post bringing me no letter from you to-day; you promised to write on the road. I reckon you arrived at your station on Sunday evening: if you do not write till next day, I shall have no letter till Thursday!

I am not at all consoled for my double loss: my only comfort is, that I flatter myself the journey and air will be of service to you both. The latter has been of use to me, though the part of the element of air has been chiefly acted by the element of water, as my poor haycocks feel! Tonton[1] does not miss you so much as I do, not having so good a taste; for he is grown very fond of *me*, and I return it for your sakes, though he deserves it too, for he is perfectly good-natured and tractable; but he is not beautiful, like his "god dog," as Mr. Selwyn, who dined here on Saturday, called my poor

[1] A dog of Miss Berry's, left in Walpole's care during their absence in Yorkshire.—M. B.

late favourite;[1] especially as I have had him clipped. The shearing has brought to light a nose an ell long; and, as he has now *nasum rhinocerotis*, I do not doubt but he will be a better critic in poetry than Dr. Johnson, who judged of harmony by the principles of an author, and fancied, or wished to make others believe, that no Jacobite could write bad verses, nor a Whig good.

Have you shed a tear over the Opera House?[2] or do you agree with me, that there is no occasion to rebuild it? The nation has long been tired of operas, and has now a good opportunity of dropping them. Dancing protracted their existence for some time! but *the room after* was the real support of both, and was like what has been said of your sex, that they never speak their true meaning but in the postscript of their letters. Would not it be sufficient to build an After-room on the whole *emplacement*, to which people might resort from all assemblies? It should be a codicil to all the diversions of London; and the greater the concourse, the more excuse there would be for staying all night, from the impossibility of ladies getting their coaches to drive up. To be crowded to death in a waiting-room, at the end of an entertainment, is the whole joy; for who goes to any diversion till the last minute of it? I am persuaded that, instead of retrenching St. Athanasius's Creed, as the Duke of Grafton proposed in order to draw *good company* to church, it would be more efficacious if the congregation were to be indulged with an After-room in the vestry; and, instead of two or three being gathered together, there would be all the world, before the prayers would be quite over.

Thursday night.

Despairing, beside a clear stream
A shepherd forsaken was laid;—[*Rowe*].

not very close to the stream, but within doors in sight of it; for in this damp weather, a lame old Colin cannot lie and despair with any comfort on a wet bank: but I smile against the grain, and am seriously alarmed at Thursday being come, and no letter! I dread one of you being ill. Mr. Batt[3] and the Abbé Nicholls[4] dined with me to-day, and I could talk of you *en pais de connoisance*. They

[1] The dog which had been bequeathed to Mr. Walpole by Madame du Deffand at her death, and which was likewise called Tonton. M. B.

[2] On the night of the 17th, the Opera-house was entirely consumed by fire.—Wright.

[3] Thomas Batt, Esq., then one of the Commissioners for auditing the Public Accounts.—Wright.

[4] The Rev. Norton Nicholls, the friend and correspondent of Gray.—Cunningham.

tried to persuade me that I have no cause to be in a fright about you; but I have such perfect faith in the kindness of both of you, as I have in your possessing every other virtue, that I cannot believe but some sinister accident must have prevented my hearing from you. I wish Friday was come! I cannot write about anything else till I have a letter.

2468. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

MADAM HANNAH, *Strawberry Hill, June* 23, 1789.

You are an errant reprobate, and grow wickeder and wickeder every day. You deserve to be treated like a *negre;* and your favourite Sunday, to which you are so partial, that you treat the other poor six days of the week as if they had no souls to be saved, should, if I could have my will, "shine no Sabbath-day for you." Now, don't simper, and look as innocent as if virtue would not melt in your mouth. Can you deny the following charges?—I lent you 'The Botanic Garden,' and you returned it without writing a syllable, or saying where you were or whither you was going; I suppose for fear I should know how to direct to you. Why, if I did send a letter after you, could not you keep it three months without an answer, as you did last year?

In the next place, you and your *nine* accomplices, who, by the way, are too good in keeping you company, have clubbed the prettiest Poem imaginable,[1] and communicated it to Mrs. Boscawen, with injunctions not to give a copy of it; I suppose because you are ashamed of having written a panegyric. Whenever you *do* compose a satire, you are ready enough to publish it; at least, whenever you do, you will din one to death with it. But now, mind your perverseness: that very pretty novel poem, and I must own it is charming, have you gone and spoiled, flying in the faces of your best friends the Muses, and keeping no *measures* with them. I'll be shot if they dictated two of the best lines with two syllables too much in each—nay, you have weakened one of them,

"Ev'n Gardiner's mind"

is far more expressive than *steadfast* Gardiner's; and, as Mrs. Boscawen says, whoever knows anything of Gardiner, could not want

[1] 'Bishop Bonner's Ghost.'—CUNNINGHAM.

that superfluous epithet; and whoever does not, would not be the wiser for your foolish insertion—Mrs. Boscawen did not call it foolish, but I do. The second line, as Mesdemoiselles the Muses handed it to you, Miss, was,

"Have all be free and saved—"

not, "All be free and all be saved:" the second *all be* is a most unnecessary tautology. The poem was perfect and faultless, if you could have let it alone. I wonder how your mischievous flippancy could help maiming that most new and beautiful expression, "sponge of sins;" I should not have been surprised, as you love verses too full of feet, if you had changed it to "that scrubbing-brush of sins."

Well! I will say no more now: but if you do not order me a copy of 'Bonner's Ghost' incontinently, never dare to look my printing-house in the face again. Or come, I'll tell you what; I will forgive all your enormities if you will let me print your poem. I like to filch a little immortality out of others, and the Strawberry press could never have a better opportunity. I will not haggle for the public; I will be content with printing only two hundred copies, of which you shall have half and I half. It shall cost you nothing but a yes. I only propose this in case you do not mean to print it yourself. Tell me sincerely which you like. But as to not printing it at all, charming and unexceptionable as it is, you cannot be so preposterous.[1]

I by no means have a thought of detracting from your own share in your own poem; but, as I do suspect that it caught some inspiration from your perusal of 'The Botanic Garden,' so I hope you will discover that *my* style is much improved by having lately studied 'Bruce's Travels.' There I dipped, and not in St. Giles's Pound, where one would think this author had been educated. Adieu! Your friend, or mortal foe, as you behave on the present occasion.

[1] Miss More, in her reply, says—"I send this under cover to the Bishop of London, to whom I write your emendations, and desire they may be considered as the true reading. What is odd enough, I did write both the lines so at first, but must go a tinkering them afterwards. I do not pretend that I am not flattered by your obliging proposal of printing these slight verses at the Strawberry press. You must do as you please, I believe. What business have I to think meanly of verses you have commended?" *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 159.—WRIGHT.

2469. TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, June 30, 1789.

WERE there any such thing as sympathy at the distance of two hundred miles, you would have been in a mightier panic than I was; for, on Saturday se'nnight, going to open the glass case in the Tribune, my foot caught in the carpet, and I fell with my whole weight (*si* weight *y a*) against the corner of the marble altar, on my side, and bruised the muscles so badly, that for two days I could not move without screaming. I am convinced I should have broken a rib, but that I fell on the cavity whence two of my ribs were removed, that are gone to Yorkshire. I am much better both of my bruise and of my lameness, and shall be ready to dance at my own wedding when my wives return. And now to answer your letter.

If you grow tired of the 'Arabian Nights,' you have no more taste than Bishop Atterbury, who huffed Pope for sending him them (or the 'Persian Tales'), and fancied he liked Virgil better, who had no more imagination than Dr. Akenside. Read 'Sinbad the Sailor's Voyages,' and you will be sick of Æneas's. What woful invention were the nasty poultry that dunged on his dinner, and ships on fire turned into Nereids! A barn metamorphosed into a cascade in a pantomime is full as sublime an effort of genius. I do not know whether the 'Arabian Nights' are of Oriental origin or not: I should think not, because I never saw any other Oriental composition that was not bombast without genius, and figurative without nature; like an Indian screen, where you see little men on the foreground, and larger men hunting tigers above in the air, which they take for perspective. I do not think the Sultaness's narratives very natural or very probable, but there is a wildness in them that captivates. However, if you could wade through two octavos[1] of Dame Piozzi's *though's* and *so's* and *I trow's*, and cannot listen to seven volumes of Scheherezade's narrations, I will sue for a divorce *in foro Parnassi*, and Boccalini shall be my proctor. The cause will be a counterpart to the sentence of the Lacedæmonian, who was condemned for

[1] Her 'Observations and Reflections made in the course of a Journey through France, Italy, and Germany,' honoured with a couplet in the Baviad—

"See Thrale's gay widow with a satchel roam,
And bring in pomp laborious nothings home."

—WRIGHT.

breach of the peace, by saying in three words what he might have said in two.

You are not the first Eurydice that has sent her husband to the devil, as you have kindly proposed to me; but I will not undertake the jaunt, for if old Nicholas Pluto should enjoin me not to look back to you, I should certainly forget the prohibition like my predecessor. Besides, I am a little too close to take a voyage twice which I am so soon to repeat; and should be laughed at by the good folks on the other side of the water, if I proposed coming back for a twinkling only. No; I choose as long as I can

Still with my fav'rite Berrys to remain.[1]

So, you was not quite satisfied, though you ought to have been transported, with King's College Chapel, because it has no aisles, like every common cathedral. I suppose you would object to a bird of paradise, because it has no legs, but shoots to heaven in a trail, and does not rest on earth. Criticism and comparison spoil many tastes. You should admire all bold and unique essays that resemble nothing else; the 'Botanic Garden,' the 'Arabian Nights,' and King's Chapel are above all rules: and how preferable is what no one can imitate, to all that is imitated even from the best models! Your partiality to the pageantry of popery I do approve, and I doubt whether the world would not be a loser (in its visionary enjoyments) by the extinction of that religion, as it was by the decay of chivalry and the proscription of the heathen deities. Reason has no invention; and as plain sense will never be the legislator of human affairs, it is fortunate when taste happens to be regent.

2470. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, July 1, 1789.

My fall, Madam, did not deserve the kind attention your Ladyship has paid to it. By bathing my side with arquebusade and camphor till I smelt like a gin-shop, even the blackness is gone, and I have no pain now but in my hay, which has been sopping these twelve days. I am determined never to cut my grass again till October, the only month whose honour one can trust: June always ruins one in hay and coals: I crouch every evening over the fire.

[1] A line from some verses that he had received.—M. B.

Madam, I know how to feel for you on the imminent danger you are in from the princely visit to Woburn. One great cause of my loyalty and legality is a wish that the King may never die, lest, on a demise of the Crown, Hampton Court should become the seat of empire, and Strawberry Hill consequently grow within the purlieus of the Court, which would be a still worse grievance than the crowds that come to see my house.

In what a combustion is France! I understand nothing I hear or read. Necker dismissed and recalled by the people! I concluded that *he* had sown the seeds of division in the States, in hopes of an excuse for dissolving them after rashly recommending them. Famine threatens them, too; an Englishman who came back a few days ago could not for any sum purchase a morsel of white bread at Calais. *We* have horse-room and cart-room for being as mad as we please. Loutherbourg, the painter, is turned an inspired physician, and has three thousand patients. His sovereign panacea is barley-water. I believe it as efficacious as mesmerism. Baron Swedenborg's disciples multiply also—I am glad of it: the more religions and the more follies the better: they inveigle proselytes from one another. I used to be afraid of the host of methodists, but Mother Church is safe if there is plenty of heresiarchs, and physicians pretend to a vocation too. You see, Madam, whatever you may have thought, that I am a good subject and a good Church-of-England-man. The fact is, all reformations are experiments, and *le jeu* seldom *vaut les chandelles*. If one could cure the world of being foolish, *à la bonne heure;* but to cure it of one folly is only making room for another. If Luther could have foreseen the bloodshed he should occasion, must he not have shuddered? He must have been better assured of his mission than I believe he was, if he thought that to save any million of souls he had a right to venture the many hundred thousands of lives that were massacred in consequenee of his doctrines.

You did not probably expect, Madam, that, in answer to a how'dye I should talk to you about Luther; but I could not send a mere card of thanks in return, and let my pen make up something like a letter as it could. Nothing had happened within my beat, but the arrival of Mrs. Jordan at the theatre at Richmond, which has raised its character exceedingly: our Jews and Gentiles throng it. I have not been there, for, though I think her perfect in her walk, I cannot sit through a whole play ill performed to see her play, however excellently, in such wretched farces as 'The Romp,' in which I have

seen her. The weather, indeed, tolerates all winter diversions; but then it is too cold to come back between two and three miles in the rain. The cuckoos, I believe, are still staying in town, for I have heard but one since I came to Twickenham. Surely it was some traveller that first propagated the idea of summer, which never ripens here more than grapes, unless in a *hot-house*. It struck me thirty years ago that this is the most beautiful country when framed and glazed, that is, when you look through a window with a good fire behind you.

Pray, Madam, send me an account of *les Amusemens des Eaux de Woburn*, or rather, I suppose, *des Vins*. How ancient Gertrude will regret not being there! *She* would show the brood mares to the young fillies, though you will not.

2471. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, July 2, 1789.

I ALMOST think I shall never abuse you again; nay, I would not, did not it prove so extremely good for you. No walnut tree is better for being threshed than you are; and, though you have won my heart by your compliance, I don't know whether my conscience will not insist on my using you ill now and then; for is there any precedent for gratitude not giving way to every other duty? Gratitude, like an earl's eldest son, is but titular, and has no place upon *trials*. But I fear I am punning sillily, instead of thanking you seriously, as I do, for allowing me to print your lovely verses. My press can confer no honour; but, when I offer it, it is a certain mark of my sincerity and esteem. It has been dedicated to friendship, to charity —too often to worthless self-love; sometimes to the rarity of the pieces, and sometimes to the merit of them; now I will unite the first motive and the last.

My fall, for which you so kindly concern yourself, was not worth mentioning; for as I only bruised the muscles of my side, instead of breaking a rib, camphire infused in arquebusade took off the pain and all consequences in five or six days: and one has no right to draw on the compassion of others for what one *has* suffered and is past. Some love to be pitied on that score; but forget that they only excite, in the best-natured, joy on their deliverance. You commend me too for not complaining of my chronical evil; but, my dear Madam, I should be blameable for the reverse. If I would

live to seventy-two, ought I not to compound for the encumbrances of old age? And who has fewer? And who has more cause to be thankful to Providence for his lot? The gout, it is true, comes frequently, but the fits are short, and very tolerable; the intervals are full health. My eyes are perfect, my hearing but little impaired, chiefly to whispers, for which I certainly have little occasion; my spirits never fail; and though my hands and feet are crippled, I can use both, and do not wish to box, wrestle, or dance a hornpipe. In short, I am just infirm enough to enjoy all the prerogatives of old age, and to plead them against anything that I have not a mind to do. Young men must conform to every folly in fashion: drink when they had rather be sober; fight a duel if somebody else is wrong-headed; marry to please their fathers, not themselves; and shiver in a white waistcoat, because ancient almanacs, copying the Arabian, placed the month of June after May; though, when the style was reformed, it ought to have been intercalated between December and January. Indeed, I have been so childish as to cut my hay for the same reason, and am now weeping over it by the fireside. But to come to business.

You must suffer me to print two hundred copies; and if you approve it, I will send thirty to the Bishop of London out of your quota. You may afterwards give him more, if you please. I do not propose putting your name, unless you desire it; as I think it would swear with the air of ancientry you have adopted in the signature and notes. The authoress will be no secret; and as it will certainly get into Magazines, why should not you deal privately beforehand with some bookseller, and have a second edition ready to appear soon after mine is finished? The difficulty of getting my edition at first, from the paucity of the number and from being only given as presents, will make the second edition eagerly sought for; and I do not see why my anticipating the publication should deprive you of the profit. Rather than do that, I would print a smaller number. I wish to raise an additional appetite to that which everybody has for your writings; I am sure I did not mean to injure you. Pray think of this; there is time enough; I cannot begin to print under a week: my press has lain fallow for some time, and my printer must prepare ink, balls, &c.; and as I have but one man, he cannot be expeditious. I seriously do advise you to have a second edition ready: why should covetous booksellers run away with *all* the advantages of your genius? They get enough by their ample share of the sale.

I will say no more, but to repeat my thanks for your consent, which truly obliges me; and I am happy to have been the instrument of preserving what your modesty would have sunk. My esteem could not increase: but one likes to be connected by favours to those one highly values.

2472. TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, July 9, 1789.

You are so good and punctual, that I will complain no more of your silence, unless you are silent. You must not relax, especially until you can give me better accounts of your health and spirits. I was peevish before with the weather; but, now it prevents your riding, I forget hay and roses, and all the comforts that are washed away, and shall only watch the weather-cock for an east wind in Yorkshire. What a shame that *I* should recover from the gout and from bruises, as I assure you I am entirely, and that *you* should have a complaint left! One would think that it was I was grown young again; for just now, as I was reading your letter in my bedchamber, while some of my *customers*[1] are seeing the house, I heard a gentleman in the Armoury ask the housekeeper as he looked at the bows and arrows, "Pray, does Mr. Walpole shoot?" No, nor with pistols neither. I leave all weapons to Lady Salisbury[2] and Mr. Lenox;[3] and, since my double marriage, have suspended my quiver in the Temple of Hymen. Hygeia shall be my goddess, if she will send you back blooming to this region.

I wish I had preserved any correspondence in France, as you are curious about their present history; which I believe very momentous indeed. What little I have accidentally heard, I will relate, and will learn what more I can. On the King's being advised to put out his talons, Necker desired leave to resign, as not having been

[1] The name given by Mr. Walpole to parties coming to view his house.—M. B.

[2] Lady Mary-Amelia, daughter of Wills, first Marquis of Downshire; married, in 1773, to James, seventh Earl of Salisbury, advanced, in August 1789, to the title of Marquis. Her ladyship was a warm patroness of the art of archery, and a first-rate equestrian. In November 1835, at the age of eighty-four, she was burnt to death at Hatfield House.—Wright.

[3] In consequence of a dispute, concerning words said to have been spoken at Daubigny's club, a duel took place at Wimbledon, on the 26th of May, between the Duke of York and Colonel Lenox, afterwards Duke of Richmond. [d. 1819]. Neither of the parties was wounded; and the seconds, Lords Rawdon and Winchelsea, certified, that both behaved with the utmost coolness and intrepidity.—Wright.

consulted, and as the measure violated his plan. The people, hearing his intention, thronged to Versailles; and he was forced to assure them from a balcony, that he was not to retire. I am not accurate in dates, nor warrant my intelligence, and therefore pretend only to send you detached scraps. Force being still in request, the Duc du Châtelet acquainted the King that he could not answer for the French Guards. Châtelet, who, from his hot arrogant temper, I should have thought would have been one of the proudest opposers of the people, is suspected to lean to them. In short, Marshal Broglio is appointed commander-in-chief, and is said to have sworn on his sword, that he will not sheathe it till he has plunged it into the heart of *ce gros banquier Genevois*. I cannot reconcile this with Necker's stay at Versailles. That he is playing a deep game is certain. It is reported that Madame Necker tastes previously everything he swallows.[1] A vast camp is forming round Paris; but the army is mutinous—the tragedy may begin on the other side. They do talk of an engagement at Metz, where the French troops, espousing the popular cause, were attacked by two German regiments, whom the former cut to pieces. The Duke and Duchess of Devonshire, who were at Paris, have thought it prudent to leave it; and my cousin, Mr. Thomas Walpole, who is near it, has just written to his daughters, that he is glad to be out of the town, that he may make his retreat easily.

Thus, you see the crisis is advanced far beyond orations, and wears all the aspect of civil war. For can one imagine that the whole nation is converted at once, and in some measure without provocation from the King, who, far from enforcing the prerogative like Charles the First, cancelled the despotism obtained for his grandfather by the Chancellor Maupeou, has exercised no tyranny, and has shown a disposition to let the constitution be amended? It did want it indeed; but I fear the present want of temper grasps at so much, that they defeat their own purposes; and where loyalty has for ages been the predominant characteristic of a nation, it cannot be eradicated at once. Pity will soften the tone of the moment; and the nobility and clergy have more interest in wearing a royal than a popular yoke; for great lords and high-priests think the rights of

[1] On the 11th of July, two days after the date of this letter, Necker received his dismission, and a formal demand to quit the kingdom. It was accompanied by a note from the King, praying him to depart in a private manner, for fear of exciting disturbances. Necker received this intimation just as he was dressing for dinner; after which, without divulging his intention to any one, he set out in the evening, with Madame Necker, for Basle. See 'Mignet,' tom. i. p. 47.—Wright.

mankind a defalcation of their privileges. No man living is more devoted to liberty than I am; yet blood is a terrible price to pay for it! A martyr to liberty is the noblest of characters; but to sacrifice the lives of others, though for the benefit of all, is a strain of heroism that I could never ambition.

I have just been reading Voltaire's 'Correspondence,'—one of those heroes who liked better to excite martyrs, than to be one. How vain would he be, if alive now! I was struck with one of his letters to La Chalotais, who was a true upright patriot and martyr too. In the 221st Letter of the sixth volume, Voltaire says to him, "Vous avez jetté des germes qui produiront un jour plus qu'on ne pense." It was lucky for me that you inquired about France; I had not a halfpenny-worth more of news in my wallet.

A person who was very apt to call on you every morning for a minute, and stay three hours, was with me the other day, and his grievance from the rain was the swarms of gnats. I said, I supposed I have very bad blood, for gnats never bite me. He replied, "I believe I have bad blood too, for dull people, who would tire me to death, never come near me." Shall I beg a pallet-full of that repellent for you, to set in your window as barbers do?

I believe you will make me grow a little of a newsmonger, though you are none; but I know that at a distance, in the country, letters of news are a regale. I am not wont to listen to the batteries on each side of me at Hampton-Court and Richmond; but in your absence I shall turn a less deaf ear to them, in hopes of gleaning something that may amuse you: though I shall leave their manufactures of scandal for their own home consumption; you happily do not deal in such wares. Adieu! I used to think the month of September the dullest of the whole set; now I shall be impatient for it.

2473. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, July 10, 1789.

Though I am touchy enough with those I love, I did not think you dilatory, nor expect that answers to letters should be as quick as repartees. I do pity you for the accident that made you think yourself remiss. I enjoy your patient's recovery; but almost smiled unawares at the idea of her being sopped, and coming out of the water brustling up her feathers and ermines, and assuming the dignity of a Jupiter Pluvius.

I beseech you not to fancy yourself vain on my being your printer: would Sappho be proud, though Aldus or Elzevir were her typographer? My press has no rank but from its narrowness, that is, from the paucity of its editions, and from being a volunteer. But a truce to compliments, and to reciprocal humility. Pray tell me how I shall convey your parcel to you: the impression is begun. I shall not dare, *vu le sujet*, to send a copy to Mrs. Garrick;[1] I do not know whether you will venture. Mrs. Boscawen shall have one, but it shall be in your name; so authorise me to present it, that neither of us may tell the whitest of fibs. Shall I deliver any others for you within my reach, to save you trouble?

I have no more corrections to make. I told you brutally at first of the only two faults I found, and you sacrificed them with the patience of a martyr; for I conclude that when a good poet knowingly sins against measure twice, he is persuaded that he makes amends by greater beauties: in such case docility deserves the palm-branch. I do not applaud your declining a London edition; but you have been so tractable, that I will let you have your way in this, though you only make over profit to Magazines. Being an honest printer myself, I have little charity for those banditti of my profession who pilfer from everybody they find on the road.

2474. TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Wednesday night [*July* 15, 1789].

I WRITE a few lines only to confirm the truth of much of what you will read in the papers from Paris. Worse may already be come, or is expected every hour.

Mr. Mackenzie and Lady Betty called on me before dinner, after the post was gone out; and he showed me a letter from Dutens, who said two couriers arrived yesterday from the Duke of Dorset and the Duchess of Devonshire, the latter of whom was leaving Paris directly. Necker had been dismissed, and was thought to be set out for Geneva. Breteuil, who was at his country-house, had been sent for to succeed him. Paris was in an uproar; and, after the couriers had left it, firing of cannon was heard for four hours together. That must have been from the Bastile, as probably the *tiers état* were not so provided. It is shocking to imagine what may

[1] Mrs. Garrick was a Roman Catholic.—WRIGHT.

have happened in such a thronged city! One of the couriers was stopped twice or thrice, as supposed to pass from the King; but redeemed himself by pretending to be despatched by the *tiers état.* Madame de Calonne told Dutens, that the newly encamped troops desert by hundreds.

Here seems the egg to be hatched, and imagination runs away with the idea. I may fancy I shall hear of the King and Queen leaving Versailles, like Charles the First, and then skips imagination six-and-forty years lower, and figures their fugitive Majesties taking refuge in this country. I have besides another idea. If the Bastile conquers, still is it impossible, considering the general spirit in the country, and the numerous fortified places in France, but some may be seized by the *dissidents,* and whole provinces be torn from the Crown? On the other hand, if the King prevails, what heavy despotism will the *états,* by their want of temper and moderation, have drawn on their country! They might have obtained many capital points, and removed great oppression. No French monarch will ever summon *états* again, if this moment has been thrown away.

Though I have stocked myself with such a set of visions for the event either way, I do not pretend to foresee what will happen. Penetration argues from reasonable probabilities; but chance and folly are apt to contradict calculation, and hitherto they seem to have full scope for action. One hears of no genius on either side, nor do symptoms of any appear. There will perhaps: such times and tempests bring forth, at least bring out, great men. I do not take the Duke of Orleans or Mirabeau to be built *du bois dont on les fait;* no, nor Monsieur Necker. He may be a great traitor, if he made the confusion designedly: but it is a woful evasion, if the promised financier slips into a black politician! I adore liberty, but I would bestow it as honestly as I could; and a civil war, besides being a game of chance, is paying a very dear price for it.

For us, we are in most danger of a deluge; though I wonder we so frequently complain of long rains. The saying about St. Swithin is a proof of how often they recur; for proverbial sentences are the children of experience, not of prophecy.[1] Good night! In a few days I shall send you a beautiful little poem from the Strawberry press.

[1] Lord John Russell has happily described a proverb as—the wisdom of many, and the wit of one.—CUNNINGHAM.

2475. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, July 16, 1789.

As my own exchequer is empty, Madam, I chose to wait before I replied to your last, till I could offer you something of another coin. The enclosed copy of verses pleased me so much, that, though not intended for publication, I prevailed on the authoress, Miss Hannah More, to allow me to take off a small number. Though I am an old printer retired from business, one cannot help now and then rubbing up one's old calling to oblige a friend, and as your Ladyship used to deal at my shop, I thought it my duty to present you with this small tribute in acknowledgment of former favours, and hope you will receive it favourably from your ancient tradesman. Perhaps you will smile at a printer talking of his exchequer; but as all orders entrench on the style of those above them, while the highest ranks sink so low that the King of France is a bankrupt, I do not think it too assuming for an old printer to talk of his till being at as low ebb as a royal treasury.

It is a very truth that I have nothing to say. The civil war in France does not proceed half fast enough to supply correspondence; and our own halcyon days are most unfruitful of events. Lord and Lady Waldegrave have been with me for two days, and are going to Scarborough: we had nothing but rain to talk on and lament the whole time. 'Bonner's Ghost' must therefore supply the place of a letter, and I wish I could often make such amends: your Ladyship would be a prodigious gainer, and so should I too: it would be worth my while to keep shop in earnest, if I could often have such wares to vend. I do think I have some merit with that tiny commonwealth, that proudly calls itself the republic of letters (and which, like Cromwell's House of Lords, is often composed of the dregs of the earth) for having, sometimes almost by force, obtained for the public works of intrinsic value or rarity. I shall sit mighty low on the bench of authors; but Kirgate and I shall not give place to many printers in the offices of the Temple of Fame.

18*th.*

I have been disappointed of the completion of 'Bonner's Ghost,' by my rolling press being out of order, and was forced to send the whole impression to town to have the copper-plate taken off. In

the mean time, the civil war in France, I find, has taken gigantic steps, and is grown out of all proportion to the size of a letter; besides, I know nothing authentic, nor can learn truth here. How strange it is to me to have lived to see what I have seen! sights that the most microscopic eye of penetration could not have discovered in embryo! America lost and settled in a Republic, the Jesuits annihilated and convents abolished by the House of Austria, all France enthusiastic for liberty! and in how few years since despotism had been established there! But I look on the present revolution in that country as a temporary paroxysm that will not last; and I grieve for the calamities which such violent transitions will inflict!—but I will not pretend to foretell, having nothing of the prophet but ignorance, without the inspiration.

At night.

Kirgate has brought the whole impression, and I shall have the pleasure of sending your Ladyship this with a 'Bonner's Ghost' to-morrow morning. I shall carry the quota that Miss More has destined to the Bishop of London [Porteus] to him on Monday morning, and shall sit in Bonner's chair.

2476. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

MY EXCELLENT FRIEND: *Strawberry Hill, Monday night, July* 20, 1789.

I NEVER shall be angry with your conscientiousness, though I will not promise never to scold it, as you know I think you sometimes carry it too far; and how pleasant to have a friend to scold on such grounds! I see all your delicacy in what you call your *double treachery*, and your kind desire of connecting two of your friends.[1] The seeds are sprung up already; and the Bishop has already condescended to make me the first, and indeed so unexpected a visit, that, had I in the least surmised it, I should certainly as became me, have prevented him. One effect, however, I can tell you your pimping between us will have: his Lordship has, to please your partiality, flattered me so agreeably in the letter you *betrayed*, that I shall never write to you again without the dread of attempting the wit he is so liberal as to bestow on me; and then either way I must

[1] With the view of making Bishop Porteus and Walpole better known to each other, Miss More had committed what she called a double treachery, in showing to the Bishop a letter she had received from Walpole, and to Walpole one sent her by the Bishop.—WRIGHT.

be dull or affected, though I hope to have the grace to prefer the former, and then you only will be the sufferer, as we both should by the latter. But I will come to facts: they are plain bodies, can have nothing to do with wit, and yet are not dull to those who have anything to do with them.

According to your order, I have delivered *Ghosts* to Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Garrick, Lady Juliana Penn, Mrs. Walsingham, and Mr. Pepys. Mr. Batt, I am told, leaves London to-day; so I shall reserve his to his return. This morning I carried his thirty to the Bishop of London, who said modestly, he should not have expected above ten. I was delighted with the Palace, with the venerable chapel, and its painted episcopalities in glass, and the brave hall, &c. &c. Though it rained, I would crawl to Bonner's chair. In short, my satisfaction would have been complete, but for wanting the presence of that Jesuitess, "the good old papist."

To-morrow departs for London, to be delivered to the Bristol coach at the White-horse Cellar in Piccadilly, a parcel containing sixty-four 'Ghosts,' one of which is printed on brown for your own eating. There is but one more such, so you may preserve it like a relic. I know these two are not so good as the white: but, as rarities, a collector would give ten times more for them; and *uniquity* will make them valued more than the charming poetry. I believe, if there was but one ugly woman in the world, she would occasion a longer war than Helen did. You will find the Bishop's letter in the parcel. I did not breathe a hint of my having seen it, as I could not conjure up into my pale cheeks the blush I ought to exhibit on such flattery.

I pity you most sincerely for your almost drowned guest. Fortune seems to delight in throwing poor *Louisas* in your way, that you may exercise your unbounded charity and benevolence. Adieu! pray write. I need not *write* to you to *pray;* but I wish, when your knees have what the common people call a worky-day, you would employ your hands the whole time. Yours most cordially.

P.S. I believe I have blundered, and that your knees would call a week-day a holiday.

2477. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, July 22, 1789.

My letter on Sunday passed your Ladyship's in the very town of Twickenham, and, I fear, without making a bow to it; however, it will make my apology for not answering incontinently your *quære* on the identity of parts of 'La Galérie de l'Ancienne Cour,' and 'Les Mémoires de St. Simon,' which struck me too. The case, I believe, was, that the Duc de Choiseul, while minister, had a copy of the latter made, which I was promised by the *duchesse* I should read; but his fall intervened, and the Duchesse de Grammont, his sister (which I could not blame), advised him not to let me have it then, as his having ordered a transcript for himself had been a pretty bold act, the MS. having been seized and deposited with the State papers. On the cessation of the persecution of Choiseul, he used to lend the transcript to persons who visited him at Chanteloup, and some of them, I have been told, made extracts, which strayed into the book your Ladyship mentions.

How the Dukes, either of St. Simon or Choiseul, would stare at the present 'Galérie de la Cour,' and the precipitate fall of the Bourbons! I have not at all digested my surprise; but being very uncertain whether a quarter of what I have heard here is true, I will not make reflections blindfold, but will obey my old maxim, *wait for the echo;* and as I conclude all France is gone mad at once, because I know not how to believe that a whole nation is come to its senses at once (which is far more unprecedented), I propose to wait for a reduplication of echoes; and if I do not live to hear the last, I shall not less expect that it will vary from the present reverberation. Amongst other questions which I am going to answer, you are pleased to kindly ask, Madam, how the late deluges, to which there is a codicil at this moment, have agreed with me. Thank you, astonishingly well; I am better in health than I have been these three years, and my sleep, *my* weather-glass, is but sounder and longer for going to bed half an hour sooner than I used to do. Accordingly, seventy-two is very grateful to the gout.

I did not see the verses in the 'Morning Herald:' they are an excellent parody, and I fancy I guess the parodist.

I return the letter with many thanks, too, and am grateful to the gout, for, as it has preserved all my teeth, though I am so old, I am

in no danger, like Mr. Layton, of being made Secretary of State, were it even as common in this country to choose great officers for having lost their teeth, as for not having cut them. If Mr. Layton is already disgraced, I suppose his Imperial Majesty of Morocco repents, like his brother Louis, of having employed a Protestant as his Minister, who, perhaps, had advised him to call an assembly of *les Etats à la façon de Barbarie Françoise*. I am shocked at the African cruelties exercised at Paris! but sudden and novel power is apt to be as tyrannous as the veteran, and more too; and nations may take violent prejudices for and against their kings, and alternately, without any cause obvious to the eye of a bystander.

I have certainly seen the most unfortunate of all mothers upon earth, as soon as I could: it was not a moment to neglect one for whom I have so much regard. The blow was very near killing her. She is but lately come to Twickenham, and looks as deplorably as you may imagine, Madam. Where the wretched pair are, I know not. The wife, whose patience and conduct have proved her a prodigy of discretion, is gone to her father, and has a jointure of 800*l.* a-year. Dreadful as her case is, still she is the least to be pitied, for time may assuage her grief; and the esteem of the world will reward her innocence: but there being no resource for the guilty pair, their miseries can only increase; and, consequently, the mother must always suffer for what they have brought on themselves, and to which she can never be insensible.

I have answered your Ladyship's interrogatories as fully as I could, and will take my leave; hoping you admire 'Bonner's Ghost,' which will not lose any of its beauties, even if you read it often.

2478. TO MRS. CARTER AT DEAL.[1]

DEAR MADAM: *Strawberry Hill, July 25, 1789.*

I HAVE the pleasure of sending you a little present, that I venture to say will be very agreeable to you. It was written by Miss More at her late visit to the Bishop of London. Mrs. Boscawen showed it to me, and I was so charmed that I wrote immediately to the authoress and insisted on printing a few copies, to which with meek modesty she consented, though she had not any such intention. The more I read it, the more I like it; it is so perfect, that I do not think a word could be amended, and yet it has all the ease and

[1] Now first collected.—CUNNINGHAM.

freedom of a sketch. The sense, satire, irony, and compliments have all their complete merit.

As I love to extract some satisfaction out of grievances, I hope that this bad summer has been favourable to your headaches. I hope, too, that the almost incessant rains have not damaged the corn and hops in your county. It ought to be a consolation to us, too, that the badness of the season has been our greatest calamity, while such tragic scenes have been acting in France, and perhaps may continue to be extended in that country. Were they to stop now, it would not be without such a humiliation of the House of Bourbon as must be astonishing. Their government was certainly a very bad one; but I cannot conceive that such a sudden and tumultuary revolution can at once produce a good and permanent constitution, when not only all the principles and spirit of the nation must be changed, but the whole system of their laws and usages too, and where the rights and privileges of the various provinces are so discordant and so different. The military, though that is extraordinary, may have been seized with this rapid enthusiasm—but are as likely to revert to their old spirit—and if the royal power is in a manner annihilated, will the nobility and clergy escape? If they are preserved from fear, will the people be much relieved? And if those two bodies are crushed, how long will the popular government be tranquil? I pretend to no authentic information on what is passing, and less to penetration; but I do not conceive that the whole frame and machine of a vast country can be overturned and resettled by a *coup de baguette*, though all the heads in it have been changed as much as when millions of Goths invaded nations and exterminated the inhabitants.

Excuse this vague speculation, but for this last week I have heard of nothing else but this strange revolution. Nobody can talk on any other subject.

I am, &c.,
HOR. WALPOLE.

P.S. I must add a few words of reflection. What a lesson ought this great convulsion to be to politicians! France, esteemed the most stable of all governments, has plunged itself into this catastrophe by its intrigues. By wasting its treasures to embroil other countries, it embarrassed its finances; the war to deprive us of America increased its debt: the pursuit of a Marine to rise on our fall, swelled that debt. A reform became expedient, and disgusted

the nobility who were at the head of all regiments. Soldiers only make risings and riots; they are generals and colonels who make rebellions. I need pursue my reflections no further.

2479. TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, July 29, 1789.

I HAVE received two dear letters from you of the 18th and 25th; and though you do not accuse me, but say a thousand kind things to me in the most agreeable manner, I allow my ancientry, and that I am an old, jealous, and peevish husband, and quarrel with you if I do not receive a letter exactly at the moment I please to expect one. You talk of mine; but if you knew how I like yours, you would not wonder that I am impatient, and even unreasonable in my demands. However, though I own my faults, I do not mean to correct them. I have such pleasure in *your* letters (I am sorry I am here forced to speak in the singular number, which by the way is an Irishism), that I *will* be cross if you do not write to me perpetually. The quintessence of your last but one was, in telling me you are better: how fervently do I wish to receive such accounts every post. But who can mend but old I, in such detestable weather?—not one hot day; and, if a morning shines, the evening closes with a heavy shower.

Of French news I can give you no fresher or more authentic account, than you can collect in general from the newspapers; but my present visitants and everybody else confirm the veracity of Paris being in that anarchy that speaks the populace domineering in the most cruel and savage manner, and which a servile multitude broken loose calls liberty; and which in all probability will end, when their Massaniello-like reign is over, in their being more abject slaves than ever; and chiefly by the crime of their Etats, who, had they acted with temper and prudence, might have obtained from their poor and undesigning King a good and permanent constitution. Who may prove their tyrant, if reviving loyalty does not in a new frenzy force him to be so, it is impossible to foresee; but much may happen first. The rage seems to gain the provinces, and threatens to exhibit the horrors of those times when the peasants massacred the gentlemen. Thus you see I can only conjecture, which is not sending you news; and my intelligence reaches me by so many rebounds, that you must not depend on anything I can tell

you. I repeat, because I hear; but draw on you for no credit. Having experienced last winter, in superaddition to a long life of experience, that in Berkeley Square I could not trust to a single report from Kew, can I swallow implicitly at Twickenham the distorted information that comes from Paris through the medium of London?

You asked me in one of your letters who La Chalotais was. I answer, premier président or avocat-général, I forget which, of the Parliament of Bretagne; a great, able, honest, and most virtuous man, who opposed the Jesuits and the tyranny of the Duc d'Aiguillon; but he was as indiscreet as he was good. Calonne was his friend and confident; to whom the imprudent patriot trusted, by letter, his further plan of opposition and designs. The wretch pretended to have business with, or to be sent for by, the Duc de la Vrillière, Secretary of State; a courtier-wretch, whose mistress used to sell lettres de cachet for a louis. Calonne was left to wait in the antechamber; but being, as he said, suddenly called in to the Minister, as he was reading (a most natural soil for such a lecture) the letter of his friend, he by a second *natural* inadvertence left the fatal letter on the chimney-piece. The consequence, much more *natural*, was, that La Chalotais was committed to the Château du Taureau, a horrible dungeon on a rock in the sea, with his son, whose legs mortified there, and the father was doomed to the scaffold; but the Duc de Choiseul sent a counter-reprieve by an express and a cross-road, and saved him. At the beginning of this reign he was restored. Paris, however, was so indignant at the treachery, that this Calonne was hissed out of the theatre, when I was in that capital. When I heard, some years after, that a Calonne was made controlleur-général, I concluded it must be a son, not conceiving that so reprobated a character could emerge to such a height; but asking my sister,[1] who has been in France since I was, she assured me it was not only the identical being, but that when she was at Metz, where I think he was intendant, the officers in garrison would not dine with him. When he fled hither for an asylum, I did not talk of his story till I saw it in one of the pamphlets that were written against him in France, and that came over hither.

Friday night, 31*st*.

My company prevented my finishing this: part left me at noon, the residue are to come to-morrow. To-day I have dined at Ful-

[1] Lady Mary Churchill.—CUNNINGHAM.

ham[1] along with Mrs. Boscawen; but St. Swithin played the devil so, that we could not stir out of doors, and had fires to chase the watery spirits. Quin, being once asked if he had ever seen so bad a winter, replied, "Yes, just such an one last summer!"—and here is its youngest brother!

Mrs. Boscawen saw a letter from Paris to Miss Sayer this morning, which says Necker's son-in-law was arrived, and had announced his father-in-law's promise of return from Basle. I do not know whether his honour or ambition prompt this compliance; surely not his discretion. I am much acquainted with him, and do not hold him great and profound enough to quell the present anarchy. If he attempts to moderate for the King, I shall not be surprised if he falls another victim to tumultuary jealousy and outrage. All accounts agree in the violence of the mob against the inoffensive as well as against the objects of their resentment; and in the provinces, where even women are not safe in their houses. The hotel of the Duc de Chatelet, lately built and superb, has been assaulted, and the furniture sold by auction; but a most shocking act of a royalist in Burgundy, who is said to have blown up a committee of forty persons, will probably spread the flames of civil rage much wider. When I read the account, I did not believe it; but the Bishop of London says, he hears the Etats have required the King to write to every foreign power not to harbour the execrable author, who is fled.[2] I fear this conflagration will not end as rapidly as that in Holland!

2480. TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.

Strawberry Hill, July 31, 1789.

HAVING had my house full of relations till this evening, I could not answer the favour of your letter sooner; and now I am ashamed of not being able to tell you that I have finished reading your 'Essay on the Ancient History of Scotland.' I am so totally unversed in the story of original nations, and I own always find myself so little interested in savage manners unassisted by individual characters, that, though *you* lead me with a firmer hand than any historian through the dark tracts, the clouds close round me the

[1] With Porteus, Bishop of London.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] After an inquiry, instituted by the National Assembly, the whole was found to be a villanous fabrication.—WRIGHT.

moment I have passed them, and I retain no memory of the ground I have trod. I greatly admire your penetration, and read with wonder your clear discovery of the kingdom of Strathclyde; but, though I bow to you, as I would to the founder of an empire, I confess I do not care a straw about your subjects, with whom I am no more acquainted than with the ancient inhabitants of Otaheite. Your origin of the Picts is most able; but then I cannot remember them with any precise discrimination from any other Hyperborean nation: and all the barbarous names at the end of the first volume, and the gibberish in the Appendix, was to me as unintelligible as if I repeated Abracadabra; and made no impression on me but to raise respect of your patience, and admire a sagacity that could extract meaning and suite from what seemed to me the most indigestible of all materials. You rise in my estimation in proportion to the disagreeable mass of your ingredients. What gave me pleasure that I felt, was the exquisite sense and wit of your introduction; and your masterly handling and confutation of the Macphersons, Whitaker, &c., there and through your work. Objection I have but one, I think you make yourself too much a party against the Celts. I do not think they were or are worthy of hatred.

Upon the whole, dear Sir, you see that your work is too learned and too deep for my capacity and shallow knowledge. I have told you that my reading and knowledge is and always was trifling and superficial, and never taken up or pursued but for present amusement. I always was incapable of dry and unentertaining studies; and of all studies the origin of nations never was to my taste. Old age and frequent disorders have dulled both my curiosity and attention, as well as weakened my memory; and I cannot fix my attention to long deductions. I say to myself, "What is knowledge to me, who stand on the verge, and must leave any old stores as well as what I may add to them; and how little could that be?"

Having thus confessed the truth, I am sure you are too candid and liberal to be offended: you cannot doubt of my high respect for your extraordinary abilities: I am even proud of having discovered them of myself without any clue. I should be very insincere, if I pretended to have gone through with eagerness your last work, which demands more intense attention than my age, eyes, and avocations will allow. I cannot read long together; and you are sensible that your work is not a book to be read by snatches and intervals; especially as the novelty, to me at least, requires some helps to connect it with the memory.

2481. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY

Strawberry Hill, Aug 4, 1789.

I HAVE had my house so filled lately by detachments of my family, that I had not a moment's time to answer your Ladyship's last.

For myself, I can say that I am not glad, in your Ladyship's sense of the words, that *Monsieur de la Fayette governs France instead of their King;* nor do my principles lead me at all to approve of government violently wrenched, or violently exercised by anybody; nor do I believe that Monsieur de la Fayette's government will be lasting. I still less like liberty displayed by massacre, and without legal trials; and abhor the savage barbarity that the French have always shown on all commotions. The factions in the reign of Charles VI., the St. Bartelemi, and the Ligue, were all ferociously cruel; and their bearing the heads of those they have now murdered in triumph, is of a piece with their tearing the heart of the Maréchal d'Ancre with their teeth.

The *États Généraux* are, in my opinion, the most culpable. The King had restored their whole constitution, which all France has so idolised; and he was ready to amend that Constitution. But the *États*, with no sense, prudence, or temper, and who might have obtained a good government, and perhaps permanently, set out with such violence to overturn the whole frame, without its being possible to replace it at once with a sound model entirely new, and the reverse of every law and custom of their whole country,—have deposed not only their King, but, I should think, their own authority, for they are certainly now trembling before the populace, and have let loose havoc through every province, which sooner or later will end in worse despotism than that they have demolished. Weak their late monarch is, I have no doubt, and irresolute; but I cannot look on a King, who offers to soften and meliorate a constitution, as deserving to be compared with those princes, who have encroached on the liberties of their people.

Give me leave to conclude this chapter, Madam, with observing, that acute as you intended your present of Monsieur de la Fayette to me for my hero, I presume to think my principles as sound and as free from prejudice, faction, and personality as those of persons who,

from pique to some, or partiality to others, applaud or condemn wholesale, whatever can be wire-drawn into a kind of parallel.

It is out of respect that I have presumed to defend myself, Madam, against your sarcasm on Lord Ossory and myself. When ladies are politicians, and love to attack, like the unfortunate Camilla in Virgil, it is irreverent not to skirmish with them a little Lord Ossory, like an ill-bred husband, is not so attentive, but in silence lets you ascribe to him what bad notions you please; but he is so temperate and reasonable, that I am persuaded his sentiments on French politics are not very different from mine.

In one point I perfectly agree with your Ladyship: every morning when I wake, and France rushes on my mind, I think I have been dreaming; nor can I at once conceive so total an inversion of a whole nation's character. Perhaps it is but a bloody fashion, momentary, like their other modes; and when they have deposed their monarch, or worse, and committed ten thousand outrages, they will rebound to loyalty, and out of penitence, confer on whoever shall be their king, unbounded power of punishing their excesses.

I did see, and wondered, Madam, at the republication of the long-forgotten verses on the 'The Three Vernons,' printed so inaccurately that I conclude somebody wrote them down by memory; for both sense or metre is destroyed in two or three places. Now, of such idle trifles, the greatest merit is to be correct; but every author, however averse to pretensions, exposes himself to being exhibited in still worse colours than he deserves; which is one of the many reasons that makes me regret having been of the calling.

General Fitzwilliam is dead, after a dreadful series of sufferings. He is worth 100,000*l.*; 500*l.* a year he leaves to his nephew the Viscount; 500*l.* a-piece to Lord Dover, Lord Frederic Cavendish, General Conway, and the two Dorrels, gentlemen of Richmond, his neighbours: near 300*l.* a year to his late wife's woman, a very meritorious servant. All the rest as residuary legatee, to his own gentleman, who had no less merit—yet 45,000*l.*, the lowest computation of the bequest, is a prodigious recompense. My neighbour Lady Charleville, very rich, too, has left a more palatable Will, and left various legacies and annuities, the latter all to centre in her heir-at-law; but I scarce know the legatees even by name. Mrs. Greville[1] is dead, too, in this district, who, I believe, had little to leave; I do not know whether even any poetry.

[1] Fanny Macartney. See vol. ii. p. 36, and vol. iii. p. 157.—CUNNINGHAM.

P.S. I forgot in my last to mention an observation that struck me on reading the excellent parody on some lines of Pope which your Ladyship sent me. It was, that in the original *chiefs out of war* is not English, nor would be intelligible without the conclusion of the line, *statesmen out of place*, which tells one that he meant *chiefs out of employment*.

2482. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 9, 1789.

You are not very corresponding (though better of late), and therefore I will not load the conscience of your fingers much, lest you should not answer me in three months. I am happy that you are content with my edition of your 'Ghost,' and with the brown copy. Everybody is charmed with your poem: I have not heard one breath but of applause. In confirmation, I enclose a note to me from the Duchess of Gloucester, who certainly never before wished to be an authoress. You may lay it up in the archives of Cowslip-green, and carry it along with your other testimonials to Parnassus.[1] Mrs. Carter, to whom I sent a copy, is delighted with it. The Bishop, with whom I dined last week, is extremely for your printing an edition for yourself, and desired I would press you to it. Mind, I do press you; and could Bonner's Ghost be laid again,—which is impossible, for it will walk for ever, and by day too,—we would have it laid in the Red Sea by some West Indian merchant, who must be afraid of spirits, and cannot be in charity with you. Mrs. Boscawen dined at Fulham with me. It rained all day; and, though the last of July, we had fires in every room, as if Bonner had been still in possession of the see.

I have not dared to recollect you too often by overt acts, dear Madam; as, by the slowness of your answer, you seem to be sorry my memory was so very alert. Besides, it looks as if you had a mind to keep me at due distance, by the great civility and cold

[1] In reply to this, Miss More says, "You not only do all you can to turn my head by printing my trumpery verses yourself, but you call in royal aid to complete my delirium. I comfort myself you will counteract some part of the injury you have done my principles this summer, by a regular course of abuse when we meet in the winter: remember that you owe this to my moral health; next to being flattered, I like to be scolded; but to be let quietly alone would be intolerable. Dr. Johnson once said to me, 'Never mind whether they praise or abuse your writings; anything is tolerable except oblivion.'" *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 169.—Wright.

complimentality of your letter; a style I flattered myself you had too much good will towards me to use. Pretensions to humility I know are generally traps to flattery; but, could you know how very low my opinion is of myself, I am sure you would not have used the terms to me you did, and which I will not repeat, as they are by no means applicable to me. If I ever had tinsel parts, age has not only tarnished them, but convinced me how frippery they were.

> Sweet are your Cowslips, sour my Strawberry Hill;
> My fruits are fallen, your blossoms flourish still.

Mrs. Boscawen told me last night, that she had received a long letter from you, which makes me flatter myself you have had no return of your nervous complaints. Mrs. Walsingham I have seen four or five times: Miss Boyle has decorated their house [Boyle Farm] most charmingly; she has not only designed, but carved in marble, three beautiful bas-reliefs, with boys, for a chimney-piece; besides painting elegant panels for the library, and forming, I do not know how, pilasters of black and gold beneath glass; in short, we are so improved in taste, that, if it would be decent, I could like to live fifty or sixty years more, just to see how matters go on. In the mean time, I wish my Macbethian wizardess would tell me "that Cowslip Dale should come to Strawberry Hill;" which, by the etiquette of oracles, you know, would certainly happen, because so improbable. I will be content if the nymph of the dale will visit the old man of the mountain, and her most sincere friend.

2483. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 14, 1789.

Though I know your Ladyship and Lord Ossory were prepared and expected the misfortune which the papers tell me has happened, I cannot help expressing the part I take in your loss of so very amiable and deserving a person as Lady Lansdowne. I am even more sensible to it, as I dread a similar misfortune in one, I may venture to say of as excellent qualities and disposition, my niece, Lady Dysart, whose case flattered us a little in the spring; but she has lately grown so much worse again, that I fear her duration will be short.

I say no more, for time only, not words, can soften such afflictions, nor can any consolations be suggested, that do not more immediately

occur to the persons afflicted. To moralise can comfort those only who do not want to be comforted.

2484. TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 14, 1789.

I MUST certainly have expressed myself very awkwardly, dear Sir, if you conceive I meant the slightest censure on your book, much less on your manner of treating it; which is as able, and clear, and demonstrative as possible. No; it was myself, my age, my want of apprehension and memory, and my total ignorance of the subject, which I intended to blame. I never did taste or study the very ancient histories of nations. I never had a good memory for names of persons, regions, places, which no specific circumstances concurred to make me remember: and now, at seventy-two, when, as is common, I forget numbers of names most familiar to me, is it possible I should read with pleasure any work that consists of a vocabulary so totally new to me? Many years ago, when my faculties were much less impaired, I was forced to quit Dow's 'History of Indostan,' because the Indian names made so little impression on me, that I went backward instead of forward, and was every minute reverting to the former page to find about whom I was reading. Your book was a still more laborious work to me; for it contains such a series of argumentation that it demanded a double effort from a weak old head; and, when I had made myself master of a deduction, I forgot it the next day, and had my pains to renew. These defects have for some time been so obvious to me, that I never read now but the most trifling books; having often said that, at the very end of life, it is useless to be improving one's stock of knowledge, great or small, for the next world. Thus, Sir, all I have said in my last letter or in this, is an encomium on your work, not a censure or criticism. It would be hard on you, indeed, if my incapacity detracted from your merit.

Your arguments in defence of works of science and deep disquisition are most just; and I am sure I have neither power nor disposition to answer them. You have treated your matter as it ought to be treated. Profound men or conversant in the subject, like Mr. Dempster, will be pleased with it, for the very reasons that made it difficult to me. If Sir Isaac Newton had written a fairy tale, I should have swallowed it eagerly; but do you imagine, Sir,

that, idle as I am, I am idiot enough to think that Sir Isaac had better have amused me for half an hour, than enlightened mankind and all ages? I was so fair as to confess to you that your work was above me, and did not divert me: you was too candid to take that ill, and must have been content with silently thinking me very silly; and I am too candid to condemn any man for thinking of me as I deserve. I am only sorry when I do deserve a disadvantageous character.

Nay, Sir, you condescend, after all, to ask my opinion of the best way of treating antiquities; and, by the context, I suppose you mean how to make them entertaining. I cannot answer you in one word; because there are two ways, as there are two sorts of readers. I should therefore say, to please antiquaries of judgment, as you have treated them, with arguments and proofs; but, if you would adapt antiquities to the taste of those only who read only to be diverted, not to be instructed, the nostrum is very easy and short. You must *divert* them in the true sense of the word *diverto;* you must turn them out of the way, you must treat them with digressions, nothing or very little to the purpose. But easy as I call this recipe, you, I believe, would find it more difficult to execute, than the indefatigable industry you have employed to penetrate chaos and extract the truth. There have been professors who have engaged to adapt all kinds of knowledge to the meanest capacities. I doubt their success, at least on me—however, you need not despair; all readers are not as dull and superannuated as, dear Sir, yours, &c.

2485. TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 19, 1789.

I WILL not use many words, but enough, I hope, to convince you that I meant no irony in my last.—All I said of you and myself was very sincere. It is my true opinion that your understanding is one of the strongest, most manly, and clearest I ever knew; and, as I hold my own to be of a very inferior kind, and know it to be incapable of sound, deep application, I should have been very foolish if I had attempted to sneer at you or your pursuits. Mine have always been light and trifling, and tended to nothing but my casual amusement; I will not say, without a little vain ambition of showing some parts; but never with industry sufficient to make me apply them to anything solid. My studies, if they could be called so, and my pro-

ductions were alike desultory. In my latter age, I discovered the futility both of my objects and writings: I felt how insignificant is the reputation of an author of mediocrity; and that, being no genius,[1] I only added one name more to a list of writers that had told the world nothing but what it could as well be without.

These reflections were the best proofs of my sense; and, when I could see through my own vanity, there is less wonder at my discovering that such talents as I might have had, are impaired at seventy-two.—Being just to myself, I am not such a coxcomb as to be unjust to you. No, nor did I cover any irony towards you, in the opinion I gave you of the way of making deep writings palatable to the mass of readers. Examine my words; and I am sure you will find that, if there was anything ironic in my meaning, it was levelled at your readers, not at you. It is my opinion, that whoever wishes to be read by many, if his subject is weighty and solid, must treat the majority with more than is to his purpose. Do not you believe that twenty name Lucretius because of the poetic commencement of his books, for five that wade through his philosophy?

I promised to say but little; and, if I have explained myself clearly, I have said enough. It is not, I hope, my character to be a flatterer: I do most sincerely think you capable of great things; and I should be a pitiful knave if I told you so unless it was my opinion; and what end could it serve to me? Your course is but beginning; mine is almost terminated. I do not want you to throw a few daisies on my grave;[2] and if you make the figure I augur you will, I shall not be a witness to it. Adieu, dear Sir!

[1] "Too modest. The author of 'The Mysterious Mother' was undoubtedly a man of genius, as well as of wit and genuine taste." *Pinkerton* ('Walpoliana,' ii. 161).—Cunningham.

[2] "—— sine pondere terram,
Spirantesque crocos, et in urna perpetuum ver.

Gentle spirit, the interested arts and insinuations that misled thy two last years of extreme old age, when even talents glimmer ere they die, shall never injure the impressions of gratitude." *Pinkerton* 'Walpoliana,' ii. 163.—Cunningham.

2486. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 25, 1789.

I HAVE not been able to obey your Ladyship in trying to amuse Lord Ossory. I have seen, heard, or know nothing entertaining. From my own windows I see the tall avenues and chimneys of Ham House, where my poor niece lies languishing and dying. She still is carried to air, and said to me two days ago, "I am not afraid now of crossing Kingston Bridge (which is very ruinous), I am too far gone myself!" This is not a theme to enliven anybody, and I will drop it.

Joyous I know nothing, but the prosperity of the harvest, which is favourable, indeed, and will ease the poor. Comparison, too, must make us happy, when such desolation has spread over the Continent. If we have the sense to preserve our tranquillity, what a moment for us! In the midst of the horrors one reads from France I could but smile at one paragraph. An Abbé de Sieyes excuses himself to the *États* from accepting the post of speaker, as he is *busy in forming a Bill of Rights and a new Constitution.* One would think he was writing a prologue to a new play! We have one monster who is groaning to create as much anarchy, that he too, I suppose, may form a new constitution! There has been in the papers a pathetic lamentation that Lord George Gordon is still in durance! So are the tigers and hyæna in the Tower, and I hope his Lordship will not find bail before they do!

Richmond is in the first request this summer. Mrs. Bouverie is settled there with a large court. The Sheridans are there, too, and the Bunburys. I have been once with the first; with the others I am not acquainted. I go once or twice a week to George Selwyn late in the evening, when he comes in from walking:—about as often to Mrs. Ellis here, and to Lady Cecilia [Johnston] at Hampton; but altogether cannot contribute to an entertaining letter, and it is odd to say that though my house is all the morning full of company, nobody lives so much alone. I have already this season had between seventy and fourscore companies to see my house; and half my time passes in writing tickets or excuses. I wish I could think as an old sexton did at King's College. One of the fellows told him he must get a great deal of money by showing it: "Oh, no! master,"

replied he, "everybody has seen it now." *My* companies, it seems, are more prolific, and every set begets one or two more.

These are miserable scraps to send you, Madam; but I have no better, and cannot spin out of myself. I had rather be insipid, too, than fancy I can amuse when I have really nothing to say. Lord Ossory knows my zeal, and how glad I should be to divert him if I could.

2487. TO RICHARD GOUGH, ESQ.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 24, 1789.

I SHALL heartily lament with you, Sir, the demolition of those beautiful chapels at Salisbury.[1] I was scandalised long ago at the ruinous state in which they were indecently suffered to remain. It appears as strange, that, when a spirit of restoration and decoration has taken place, it should be mixed with barbarous innovation. As much as taste has improved, I do not believe that modern execution will equal our models. I am sorry that I can only regret, not prevent. I do not know the Bishop of Salisbury[2] even by sight, and certainly have no credit to obstruct any of his plans. Should I get sight of Mr. Wyatt, which it is not easy to do, I will remonstrate against the intended alteration; but, probably, without success, as I do not suppose he has authority enough to interpose effectually: still, I will try.

It is an old complaint with me, Sir, that when families are extinct, Chapters take the freedom of removing ancient monuments, and even of selling over again the sites of such tombs. A scandalous, nay, dishonest abuse, and very unbecoming clergymen! Is it creditable for divines to traffic for consecrated ground, and which the church had already sold? I do not wonder that magnificent monuments are out of fashion when they are treated so disrespectfully. You, Sir, alone, have placed several out of the reach of such a kind of simoniacal abuse; for to buy into the church, or to sell the church's land twice over, breathes a similar kind of spirit. Perhaps, as the subscription indicates taste, if some of the subscribers could be persuaded to object to the removal of the two beautiful

[1] The chapels in Salisbury Cathedral were destroyed about this time by Wyatt, the architect, and many of the monuments removed to the nave:—a sad demolition, most justly regretted by Walpole and Gough.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] Dr. Shute Barrington; in 1791, translated to the see of Durham.—WRIGHT.

chapels, as contrary to their view of beautifying, it might have good effect; or, if some letter were published in the papers against the destruction, as barbarous and the result of bad taste, it might divert the design. I zealously wish it were stopped, but I know none of the Chapter or subscribers.

2488. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Thursday evening, Aug. 27, 1789.

I JUMPED for joy,—that is, my heart did, which is all the remain of me that is *in statu jumpante*,—at the receipt of your letter this morning, which tells me you approve of the house at Teddington. How kind you was to answer so incontinently! I believe you borrowed the best steed from the races. I have sent to the landlord to come to me to-morrow: but I could not resist beginning my letter to-night, as I am at home alone, with a little pain in my left wrist; but the right one has no brotherly feeling for it, and would not be put off so. You ask how you have deserved such attentions? Why, by deserving them; by every kind of merit, and by that superlative one to me, your submitting to throw away so much time on a forlorn antique—you two, who, without specifying particulars, (and you must, at least, be conscious that you are not two frights,) might expect any fortune and distinctions, and do delight all companies. On which side lies the wonder? Ask me no more such questions, or I will cram you with reasons.

My poor dear niece[1] grows worse and worse: the medical people do not pretend to give us any hopes; they only say she may last some weeks, which I do not expect, nor do absent myself. I had promised Mr. Barrett to make a visit to my Gothic child, his house, on Sunday; but I have written to-day to excuse myself: so I have to the Duchess of Richmond,[2] who wanted me to meet her mother, sister,[3] and General Conway, at Goodwood next week.

I wish Lady Fitzwilliam may not hear the same bad news as I expect, in the midst of her royal visitors: her sister, the Duchess of St. Albans, is dying, in the same way as Lady Dysart; and for

[1] The Countess of Dysart.—M. B.

[2] Lady Mary Bruce, daughter of the Earl of Ailesbury, by Caroline Campbell, daughter of General John Campbell, afterwards Duke of Argyle.—M. B.

[3] Mrs. Damer, only child of the Dowager Countess of Ailesbury, by Marshal Henry Seymour Conway, her second husband. She was thus half-sister to the Duchess of Richmond.—M. B.

some days has not been in her senses. How charming you are to leave those festivities for your good parents; who I do not wonder are impatient for you. I, who am old enough to be your great-grandmother, know one needs not be your near relation to long for your return. Of all your four, next to your duteous visits, I most approve the jaunt to the sea: I believe in its salutary air more than in the whole college and all its works.

You must not expect any news from me, French or homebred. I am not in the way of hearing any: your morning gazetteer rarely calls on me, as I am not likely to pay him in kind. About royal progresses, paternal or filial, I never inquire; nor do you, I believe, care more than I do. The small wares in which the societies at Richmond and Hampton Court deal, are still less to our taste. My poor niece and her sisters take up most of my time and thoughts: but I will not attrist you to indulge myself, but will break off here, and finish my letter when I have seen your new landlord. Good night!

Friday.

Well! I have seen him, and nobody was ever so accommodating! He is as courteous as a candidate for a county. You may stay in his house till Christmas if you please, and shall pay but twenty pounds; and if more furniture is wanting, it shall be supplied.

2489. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 4, 1789.

You ask whether I will call you wise or stupid for leaving York races in the middle—neither; had you chosen to stay, you would have done rightly. The more young persons see, where there is nothing blameable, the better; as increasing the stock of ideas early will be a resource for age. To resign pleasure to please tender relations is amiable, and superior to wisdom; for wisdom, however laudable, is but a selfish virtue. But I do decide peremptorily, that it was very prudent to decline the invitation to Wentworth House,[1] which was obligingly given; but, as I am very proud for you, I should have disliked your being included in a mobbish kind of *cohue* You two are not to go where any other two misses would have been equally *priées*, and where people would have been thinking of the Princes more than of the Berrys. Besides, princes are so rife now

[1] The Prince of Wales and the Duke of York were going to receive a great entertainment at Wentworth House—M. B.

that, besides my sweet nephew [the Duke of Gloucester] in the Park, we have another at Richmond: the Duke of Clarence has taken Mr. Henry Hobart's house, point-blank over against Mr. Cambridge's, which will make the good woman of that mansion cross herself piteously, and stretch the throat of the blatant beast at Sudbrook [Lady Greenwich], and of all the other pious matrons *à la ronde;* for his Royal Highness, to divert lonesomeness, has brought with him [Mrs. Jordan], who, being still more averse to solitude, declares that any tempter would make even Paradise more agreeable than a constant *tête-à-tête.*

I agree with you in not thinking Beatrice one of Miss Farren's capital parts. Mrs. Pritchard played it with more spirit, and was superior to Garrick's Benedict; so is Kemble, too, as he is to Quin in Maskwell. Kemble and Lysons the clergyman passed all Wednesday here with me. The former is melting the three parts of 'Henry the Sixth' into one piece: I doubt it will be difficult to make a tolerable play out of them.

I have talked scandal from Richmond, like its gossips; and now, by your queries after Lady Luxborough, you are drawing me into more, which I do not love: but she is dead and forgotten, except on the shelves of an old library, or on those of my old memory; which you will be routing into. The Lady you wot of, then, was the first wife of Lord Catherlogh, before he was an earl; and who was son of Knight, the South Sea cashier, and whose second wife lives here at Twickenham. Lady Luxborough,[1] a high-coloured, lusty black woman, was parted from her husband, upon a gallantry she had with Dalton, the reviver of 'Comus' and a divine. She retired into the country; corresponded, as you see by her Letters, with the small poets of that time; but, having no Theseus amongst them, consoled herself, as it is said, like Ariadne, with Bacchus. This might be a fable, like that of her Cretan Highness—no matter; the fry of little anecdotes are so numerous now, that throwing one more into the shoal is of no consequence, if it entertains you for a moment; nor need you believe what I don't warrant.

Gra'mercy for your intention of seeing Wentworth Castle: it is my favourite of all great seats;—such a variety of ground, of wood, and water; and almost all executed and disposed with so much taste by the present Earl. Mr. Gilpin sillily could see nothing but

[1] Half-sister of the great Lord Bolingbroke. See vol. vi. pp. 233, 285, and 296.—CUNNINGHAM.

faults there. The new front is, in my opinion, one of the lightest and most beautiful buildings on earth: and, pray like the little Gothic edifice, and its position in the menagerie! I recommended it, and had it drawn by Mr. Bentley, from Chichester Cross. Don't bring me a pair of scissors from Sheffield: I am determined nothing shall cut our loves, though I should live out the rest of Methusalem's term, as you kindly wish, and as I can believe, though you are my wives; for I am persuaded my Agnes wishes so too. Don't you?

At night.

I am just come from Cambridge's, where I have not been in an evening, time out of mind. Major Dixon, alias "the Charming-man,"[1] is there; but I heard nothing of the Emperor's rickets;[2] a great deal, and many horrid stories, of the violences in France; for his brother, the Chevalier Jerningham, is just arrived from Paris. You have heard of the destruction of thirty-two chateaus in Burgundy, at the instigation of a demon, who has since been broken on the rack. There is now assembled near Paris a body of sixteen thousand deserters, daily increasing; who, they fear, will encamp and dictate to the capital, in spite of their militia of twenty thousand bourgeois. It will soon, I suppose, ripen to several armies, and a civil war; a fine *acheminement* to liberty!

My poor niece [Lady Dysart] is still alive, though weaker every day, and pronounced irrecoverable: yet it is possible she may live some weeks; which, however, is neither to be expected nor wished, for she eats little and sleeps less. Still she is calm, and behaves with the patience of a martyr.

You may perceive, by the former part of my letter, that I have been dipping into Spenser again, though he is no passion of mine: there I lighted upon two lines that, at first sight, reminded me of Mademoiselle d'Eon,

> Now, when Marfisa had put off her beaver,
> To be a woman every one perceive her;

[1] Edward Jerningham, Esq., of Cossey, in Norfolk, uncle to the present [1840] Lord Stafford. He was distinguished in his day by the name of Jerningham *the poet;* but it was an unpoetical day. The stars of Byron, of Baillie, and of Scott, had not risen on the horizon. The well-merited distinction of Jerningham was the friendship, affection, and intimacy which his amiable character had impressed on the author, and on all of his society mentioned in these letters.—M. B. "Mr. Jerningham, whom Lord Mulgrave calls a pink and white poet, (for not only his cheeks but his coat is pink,) is a man of affected delicacy."—*Fanny Burney's Diary*, 1780, vol. i. p. 284.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] This alludes to something said in a character which Mr. Jerningham had assumed, for the amusement of a society some time before at Marshal Conway's.—M. B.

but I do not think that is so perceptible in the 'Chevalière.' She looked more feminine, as I remember her, in regimentals, than she does now. She is at best a hen-dragoon, or an Herculean hostess. I wonder she does not make a campaign in her own country, and offer her sword to the almost-dethroned monarch, as a second Joan of Arc. Adieu! for three weeks I shall say, Sancte Michael, ora pro nobis! You seem to have relinquished your plan of sea-coasting. I shall be sorry for that; it would do you good.

2490. TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 5, 1789.

You speak so unperemptorily of your motions, that I must direct to you at random: the most probable place where to hit you, I think, will be Goodwood; and I do address this thither, because I am impatient to thank you for your tale, which is very pretty and easy and genteel. It has made me make a reflection, and that reflection made six lines; which I send you, not as good, but as expressing my thoughts on your writing so well in various ways which you never practised when you was much younger. Here they are:

> The Muse most wont to fire a youthful heart,
> To gild *your* setting sun reserved her art;
> To crown a life in virtuous labours pass'd,
> Bestow'd her numbers, and her wit at last;
> And, when your strength and eloquence retire,
> Your voice in notes harmonious shall expire.

The *swan* was too common a thought to be directly specified, and, perhaps, even to be alluded to: no matter, such a trifle is below criticism.

I am still here, in no uncertainty, God knows, about poor Lady Dysart,[1] of whom there are not the smallest hopes. She grows weaker every day, and does actually still go out for the air, and may languish many days, though most probably will go off in a moment, as the water rises. She retains her senses perfectly, and as perfectly her unalterable calmness and patience, though fully sensible of her situation. At your return from Goodwood, I shall like to come to you, if you are unengaged, and ready to receive me.

[1] Lady Dysart died on the day this letter was written.—Wright.

For the beauties of Park-place, I am too well acquainted with them, not, like all old persons about their contemporaries, to think it preserves them long after they are faded; and I am so *unwalking;* that prospects are more agreeable to me when framed and glazed, and I look at them through a window. It is yourselves I want to visit, not your verdure. Indeed, except a parenthesis of scarce all August, there has been no temptation to walk abroad; and the tempter himself would not have persuaded me, if I could, to have climbed that long-lost mountain whence he could show one even the Antipodes. It rained incessantly all June and all July; and now again we have torrents every day.

Jerningham's brother, the Chevalier, is arrived from Paris, and does not diminish the horrors one hears every day. They are now in the capital, dreading the sixteen thousand deserters who hover about them. I conclude that when in the character of banditti the whole disbanded army have plundered and destroyed what they can, they will congregate into separate armies under different leaders, who will hang out different principles, and the kingdom will be a theatre of civil wars; and, instead of liberty, the nation will get petty tyrants, perhaps petty kingdoms: and when millions have suffered, or been sacrificed, the government will be no better than it was, all owing to the intemperance of the *états*, who might have obtained a good constitution, or at least one much meliorated, if they had set out with discretion and moderation. They have left too a sad lesson to despotic princes, who will quote this precedent of frantic *États* against assembling any more, and against all the examples of senates and parliaments that have preserved rational freedom. Let me know when it will be convenient to you to receive me. Adieu!

2491. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. —, 1789.

I KNOW whence you wrote last, but not where you are now; you gave me no hint. I believe you fly lest I should pursue, and as if you were angry that I have forced you to sprout into laurels. Yet you say you are vain of it, and that you are no philosopher. Now, if you are vain, I am sure you *are* a philosopher; for it is a maxim of mine, and one of my own making, that there never was a philosopher that did not love *sweetmeats*. You tell me too, that you like I should scold you; but since you have appeared as Bonner's

ghost, I think I shall feel too much awe; for though (which I never expected would be in my power) I have made you stand *in a white sheet*, I doubt my respect is increased. I never did rate you for being too bad, but too good: and if, when you make up your week's account, you find but a fraction of vanity in the sum total, you will fall to repenting, and come forth on Monday as humble as * * *. Then, if I huff my heart out, you will only simper, and still wrap yourself up in your obstinate goodness. Well! take your own way; I give you up to all your abominable virtues, and will go answer the rest of your letter.

I congratulate you on the demolition of the Bastile; I mean as you do, of its functions.[1] For the poor soul itself, I had no ill will to it: on the contrary, it was a curious sample of ancient castellar dungeons, which the good folks the founders took for palaces: yet I always hated to drive by it, knowing the miseries it contained. Of itself it did not gobble up prisoners to glut its maw, but received them by command. The destruction of it was silly, and agreeable to the ideas of a mob, who do not know stones and bars and bolts from a *lettre de cachet*. If the country remains free, the Bastile would be as tame as a ducking-stool, now that there is no such thing as a scold. If despotism recovers, the Bastile will rise from its ashes!—recover, I fear, it will. The *États* cannot remain a mob of kings, and will prefer a single one to a larger mob of kings and greater tyrants. The nobility, the clergy, and people of property will wait, till by address and money they can divide the people; or, whoever gets the larger or more victorious army into his hands, will be a Cromwell or a Monk. In short, a revolution procured by a national vertigo does not promise a crop of legislators. It is time that composes a good constitution: it formed ours. We were near losing it by the lax and unconditional Restoration of Charles the Second. The Revolution was temperate, and has lasted; and, though it might have been improved, we know that with all its moderation it disgusted half the nation, who would have brought back the old sores.

I abominate the Inquisition as much as you do; yet if the King of Spain receives no check like his cousin Louis, I fear he will not

[1] Miss More had written to Walpole,—"Poor France! though I am sorry that the lawless rabble are so triumphant, I cannot help hoping, that some good will arise from the sum of human misery having been so considerably lessened at one blow by the destruction of the Bastile. The utter extinction of the Inquisition, and the redemption of Africa, I hope yet to see accomplished." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 170.—WRIGHT.

be disposed to relax any terrors. Every crowned head in Europe must ache at present; and the frantic and barbarous proceedings in France will not meliorate the stock of liberty, though for some time their Majesties will be mighty tender of the rights of their subjects.

According to this hypothesis, I can administer some comfort to you about your poor Negroes. I do not imagine that they will be emancipated at once; but their fate will be much alleviated, as the attempt will have alarmed their butchers enough to make them gentler, like the European monarchs, for fear of provoking the disinterested, who have no sugar plantations, to abolish the horrid traffic.

I do not understand the manœuvre of sugar, and, perhaps, am going to talk nonsense, as my idea may be impracticable; but I wish human wit, which is really very considerable in mechanics and merchantry, could devise some method of cultivating canes and making sugar without the manual labour of the human species. How many mills and inventions have there not been discovered to supply succedaneums to the work of the hands, and which before the discoveries would have been treated as visions! It is true, manual labour has sometimes taken it very ill to be excused, and has destroyed such mills; but the poor negroes would not rise and insist upon being worked to death. Pray talk to some ardent genius, but do not name me; not merely because I may have talked like an idiot, but because my ignorance might, *ipso facto*, stamp the idea with ridicule. People, I know, do not love to be put out of their old ways: no farmer listens at first to new inventions in agriculture; and I don't doubt but bread was originally deemed a new-fangled vagary, by those who had seen their fathers live very comfortably upon acorns. Nor is there any harm in starting new game to invention: many excellent discoveries have been made by men who were *à la chasse* of something very different. I am not quite sure that the arts of making gold, and of living for ever, have been yet found out: yet to how many noble discoveries has the pursuit of those nostrums given birth! Poor chemistry, had she not had such glorious objects in view! If you are sitting under a cowslip at your cottage, these reveries may amuse you for half an hour, at least make you smile; and for the ease of your conscience, which is always in a panic, they require no answer.

[1] To this passage Miss More thus replies:—"Your project for relieving our poor slaves by machine work is so far from being wild or chimerical, that of three persons

I will not ask you about the new History of Bristol,[1] because you are too good a citizen to say a word against your native place; but do pray cast your eye on the prints of the cathedral and castle, the *chef-d'œuvres* of Chatterton's ignorance, and of Mr. Barrett's too, and on two letters pretended to have been sent to me, and which never were sent. If my incredulity had wavered, they would have fixed it. I wish the Milkwoman [Mrs. Yearsley] would assert that Boadicea's dairymaid had invented Dutch tiles; it would be like Chatterton's origin of heraldry and painted glass, in those two letters. I must, however, mention one word about myself. In the new fourth volume of the 'Biographia Britannica' I am more candidly treated about that poor lad than usual; yet the writer still affirms that, according to my own account, my reply was too much in the common-place style of court-replies. Now my own words, and the truth, as they stand in print in the very letter of mine which this author quotes, were, "I wrote him a letter with as much kindness and tenderness as if I had been his guardian." Is this by my own account a court-reply? Nor did I conceive, for I never was a courtier, that courtiers are wont to make *tender* replies to the poor; I am glad to hear they do.

I have kept this letter some days in my writing-box, till I could meet with a stray member of parliament, for it is not worth making you pay for: but when you talk to me I cannot help answering incontinently: besides, can one take up a letter at a long distance, and heat one's reply over again with the same interest that it occasioned at first? Adieu! I wish you may come to Hampton before I leave these purlieus!

Yours *More* and *More*.

2492. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 13, 1789.

Lady Dysart, indeed, Madam, was an excellent person, and I have reason to lament her, and thank your Ladyship much for your condolence. I had long known her doom was certain. She was convinced of it herself, was impatient for it, though calm and

deep and able in the concern (Mr. Wilberforce among others), not one but has thought it rational and practicable, and that a plough may be so constructed as to save much misery." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 187.—Wright.

[1] 'The History and Antiquities of Bristol, by William Barrett.' Bristol, 1789, quarto.—Wright.

resigned to the last. Her Lord is much more afflicted than I thought him capable of being; but the person who felt it most deeply is [her sister] the Duchess of Gloucester. They had been dear friends from their infancy. Both she and Mrs. Keppel sat by the corpse the next morning for two hours, for which I was very sorry; but I will not tire your Ladyship with family stories, though I have nothing else to tell you, having scarce seen anybody lately but my relations.

I am very glad you are out of pain about Lady Ravensworth. I hope she will be preserved as long as Lady Albemarle, who, at eighty-six, has recovered of a thrush, and has her senses and spirits as well as ever. I seem to have some grains of immortality too, for the night before last, going into a stone-hall at Hampton Court, a very low step, that I did not perceive in the dusk, tripped me up, and gave me a worse fall than I had when your Ladyship did me the honour of dining here this summer. I fell headlong at once on the stones, and against the leg of a table, bruised one of my fingers, both knees and an elbow, and battered my hip so much that it has a patch as large as the crown of a hat, and as black; but there again my featherhood saved me, and I did not break one of my straw-bones.

You see, Madam, to what your old gazetteer is dwindled, when he has nothing but his own mishaps to relate! You might as well correspond with the apothecary of an almshouse; however, I was not overturned with a young prince coming from races, like that stripling Lord Clermont. *The world*, notwithstanding my unbudging quietness, has sent me, I am told, on a party of pleasure to Coomb Bank, and furnished me with fifty qualifications and graces that never accompanied me in my best days. I had flattered myself, that to do nothing was the best nostrum for having nothing said of one; but I see anybody may be taxed to contribute a paragraph. Mercy on us! what idle folk there must be, when it is necessary to feed them with such daily bread! Surely no other age ever lived on such insipid fare! Stout horses as they were, how the Houyhnhnms would have stared if they had been told, that in a certain country there were Daily Courants to inform the public of what every old Strulbrug was *not* doing. Pope's Memoirs of P. P., or the Importance of a Man to himself, is moderate in comparison of the importance of nobody to everybody.

Is not this the season for Farming-Woods, Madam? I wish Lord Ossory great sport! The despotic mob at Paris, as the rule of contraries is the first law of a revolution, have made such a massacre of game *à la ronde*, that pheasants are sold at a penny a-piece. I

doubt, from the present turbulence of France, you will have no 'Memoires de St. Simon,' nor 'Lettres de la Duchesse d'Orleans,' to carry in the chaise with you.

À propos, here is a paragraph verbatim that I found t'other day in the first volume, p. 260, in an old publication of the Abbé Raynal, called 'Anecdotes Historiques, Militaires, et Politiques de l'Europe depuis l'Elévation de Charles Quint, &c., jusqu'au Traité d'Aix la Chapelle en 1748,' published in 1753.

"Le Dauphin paroissoit né pour gouverner agréablement une monarchie paisible. Le Duc d'Orleans avait tout ce qu'il falloit pour la troubler, y allumer des guerres civiles, et y causer peut-être des Revolutions."

This after-birth of a miscarriage, for that Duke of Orleans, the younger son of Francis I., died without doing anything, has revived in the person of a prophecy.—Adieu, Madam.

2493. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 26, 1789.

My excuse for not answering your Ladyship's two letters directly is, that I have been at Park-place, and they waited for me here. This little expedition proves that I have quite recovered of my tumble, of which only a large black mark remains down my side. You are very kind to caution me, but in truth my two late falls have made me so timorous, that I tread with as much awe as if I were to step over nine hot ploughshares.

I am much obliged too for your French anecdotes, Madam, which I had not heard. All their proceedings appear to me shocking or absurd to a degree. I do not guess on what grounds Mr. Wyndham foretells their *success*. I had been told that he thought their debates ridiculous, but a prophet has more strings to his bow than one who only forms his opinion by a small share of common sense. Not that I pretend to any sagacity, which must often be at a fault, for it calculates only by probabilities and experience, and cannot take into its account folly and chance, the two principal arbiters of human affairs; but what does Mr. Wyndham mean by *success?* Is the whole kingdom of France to remain always in such blessed liberty, that every individual is to murder, plunder, and trample on every law? Or out of this lawless and savage scene is order, justice, and temper to arise? Nay, when some constitution is *voted*, will it take

place? and if it does, how long will be its duration? Will a new Assembly of *États*, elected every two years, corroborate the ordinances of their predecessors? Will they not think themselves as wise, and prove as foolish? What an absurdity is it not to strip the King of all his power, and yet maintain that it is necessary by the laws that he should assent to every act of violence they pass against him? And compelled, will he think himself bound by that forced assent? Is it not, if possible, still more outrageous, and before they have settled anything at home, to be debating whether they shall allow the King of Spain any future claim to the crown?

In short, they have launched into an ocean of questions that would take a century to discuss, and suppose that a mob of prating legislators, under the rod of the mob of Paris, and questionable by every tumultuous congregation in the provinces, are an all-powerful senate, and may give laws to other kingdoms as well as to their own; though I do not find that *ces messieurs* can command twenty thousand men, and must already have provoked, as they have injured, a very considerable part of their own countrymen.

In the midst of this anarchy, is it not supremely ridiculous to hear of a young gentlewoman presenting her watch to the National Fund; and a life-guardsman five-and-twenty livres? Nay, there are some tradesmen's wives appointed commissioners for receiving such patriotic oblations!—In a word, Madam, it is a vertigo of pedantry, and I am surprised they have not yet begun to make songs and epigrams on themselves! But so much do I differ from Mr. Wyndham, that I think they have lost a glorious moment for obtaining a considerable amendment of their constitution, and perhaps a lasting one, by their intemperance; and that they have either entailed endless civil wars on, perhaps, a division of their country, or will sink under worse despotism than what they have shaken off. To turn a whole nation loose from all restraint, and tell them that every man has a right to be his own king, is not a very sage way for preparing them to receive a new code, which must curtail that boundless prerogative of free will, and probably was not the first lesson given on the original institution of government. The present host of lawgivers must, I doubt, cut the throats of half their pupils, before they persuade the other half to go to school again to any regular system.

I would not be uncharitable, but methinks Monsieur Necker's magnificence towards Madame de Polignac, looks a little as if he did not think the Queen's influence entirely cut up by the roots. Her mockery, however, is not very captivating.

Madame de Boufflers and the Comtesse Emilie, her daughter-in-law, I hear, are come to London; and Woronzow, the Russian minister, who has a house at Richmond, is to lend it to her for the winter, as her fortune has received some considerable blow in the present commotions. I pity her much more than the Dame de Polignac, as she could have no hand in causing the grievances, or in the tempestuous correction of them.

I have had no royal visit from Richmond, Madam. The Duke of Clarence, (no wonder—at his age), is already weary of a house [Mr. Hobart's] in the middle of a village with nothing but a green short apron to the river, a situation only fit for an old gentlewoman who has put out her knee-pans and loves cards. The Prince [of Wales] has taken a somewhat better place at Roehampton, and enters upon it at Christmas.

My Straw-Berries are not yet returned, but I expect them next week, and have found a house for them at Teddington very near me.

I am sorry to tell your Ladyship, if you do not know it, that Lord Waldegrave is ill of the jaundice at Lord Aylesford's, in Warwickshire.[1] He is rather better than he was, but I believe it is a disorder never cured expeditiously; I am sure not so soon as I wish, whc interest myself exceedingly about him.

You go later to your forest, Madam, I think, than you used to do. Did your Parisian intelligencer inform you that in the present reign of everybody there has been such a massacre of all game, that pheasants are sold for a penny a-piece? I never admired game acts, but I do not wish to see guns in the hands of all the world, for there are other *feræ naturæ* besides hares and partridges; and when all Europe is admiring and citing our constitution, I am for preserving it where it is. The decry of prerogative on the continent is a good counter-security to us; I do not think the season will invite anybody to encroach on liberty; and I hope Liberty will be content to sit under her own vine and fig-tree, and receive the advantages that France is flinging into her lap.

> "Quod optanti divum promittere nemo
> Auderet, volvendo Dies en attulit ultro!"

If you pretend not to understand this passage, Madam, Lord Ossory will construe it, or if he is abroad shooting, Virgil only means that no speculating banker in England would have dared to bet that our stocks would ever rise to eighty by an influx of French money.

[1] Packington Hall, near Coventry.—CUNNINGHAM.

P.S. I own I shall be curious to see the new constitution of France when it shall be formed, if formed it can be. It must be a curious patchwork composed from sudden and unconnected motions, started in a hurlyburly of disputes, without any plan or system, and voted as fluctuating interests and passions preponderate sometimes one way, sometimes another, with no harmony in the compost, but calculated to contradict every view of the old government,—or secretly to preserve enough of it to counteract the new. Nay, such a total subversion annihilates all the lawyers as well as all the laws of the kingdom. The professors may now literally burn their books, for which of them can they quote? This idea might be extended *in infinitum*.

2494. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 9, 1789.

My letters, Madam, except when they ought to hasten with my thanks for any new mark of your goodness, may flit backwards and forwards as often, and for as long as they please. They contain no novelty, and, like ugly persons, will not grow the worse for their age. Years and frequent confinement have thrown me so beside the current of society, that I wonder you have still patience with my correspondence. I have now been pinioned to my couch for a fortnight by the gout again, and am still carried thence to my bed by two servants. My fits are certainly very short, and attended by little pain; but they return so frequently, that they rather give me holidays than intervals. This is the fifth attack in twenty months. Still, I am quite content:—I do not wish to be at races or watering-places.

I am sorry your Ladyship has lost an opportunity of being acquainted with Mrs. Allanson (—the husband I never saw). She has great merit, sense, and spirit, acquired all the good of her mistress, the learned Aspasia, and none of her pretensions and affectations, of which I doubt she was a little weary, though nobody could behave with more respect and gratitude for really great obligations. Aspasia has both knowledge and wit, with many virtues, but, mercy on us! they are both indefatigably for ever at one's service!

I allow all the merit of 'Anacharsis,' and do believe your Ladyship reads it; but I know that its great vogue at Paris, on its first appearance, was during the first fortnight, when, to be sure, nobody

had got through thirty pages of the first volume. I penetrated a great way, and though I was tired of it, it was not from any faults I found, but it did not interest me in the least. Mrs. Damer is a convert, and is now reading it. I broke off at the Lacedemonians, whom I abhor, though I allow the merit your Ladyship so justly admires in them, their brevity, and which you still more justly apply in wishing it to the *Tiers État*. Do *you* know, Madam, that my dear old friend, Madame du Deffand, had a mortal aversion to eloquence, though *she* herself, without knowing it, was more naturally eloquent than anybody? I doubt it will lose its credit a little, and that the tongue will not be the arbiter at last of the destiny of France. I see, in the papers, that the prelates of the Germanic provinces absorbed by France, already murmur at the freedoms taken with their privileges by the *États*. For these three months I have thought it not unlikely that, considering the number of strong fortresses round the circumference of France, some might be seized by troops in different interests, and even some provinces dismembered. It is more probable than, that the present chaos should subside into one regular compact government on a foundation totally new. That (the division) would be more beneficial to us and to Europe, than the conquest of it.

I was disgusted, like you, Madam, at our pantomimes of the horrors of the Bastile; but they have almost estranged my pity for the exiles, who can go and view such sanguinary farces: without incredible insensibility!

My neighbour, the Duke of Clarence, is so popular, that if Richmond were a borough, and he had not attained his title, but still retained his idea of standing candidate, he would certainly be elected there. He pays his bills regularly himself, locks up his doors at night, that his servants may not stay out late, and never drinks but a few glasses of wine. Though the value of crowns is mightily fallen of late at market, it looks as if his Royal Highness thought they were still worth waiting for; nay, it is said that he tells his brothers that he shall be king before either—this is fair at least.[1] My last letter from Lady Waldegrave gave a better:

Tuesday night, 13*th*.

I had just written the above words on Friday, Madam, when I

[1] Slender as his chance was in 1789, Clarence came to the crown in 1830, on the death of his elder brother, at this time (1789) the Prince of Wales.—CUNNINGHAM.

was thunderstruck by a note from the Duchess, with an account of Lord Waldegrave's extreme danger—I cannot describe the alarm it gave me. My niece, too, being past her time, naturally so tender and so nervous, and so wrapt up in her Lord—I expected to lose both at once! Yesterday I was relieved by a much more favourable account than my best hopes could expect. His disorder has taken a most promising turn, by a vast discharge of bile, and all the letters speak of him as much better. Still I dare not be too sanguine; yet what a change from concluding him gone!

I can say nothing on the atrocious accounts from France, though the last accounts soften the first. One pities the impatient indiscretion of the King and Queen, but the treatment of them is unexampled! What an odious cowardly nation, to let their prince be seized and carried prisoner to his capital, with the most insulting cruel triumph, by a rabble of fish-women! I could almost use the Billingsgate of those furies to express scorn of their men!—and, if possible, my still greater contempt for their *Etats*, who set out with assuming omnipotent power, and are trampled into the dirt by oyster-women!

What becomes of their great air-balloon, Necker, who has already broken several necks, and will soon burst himself, and be the sport of winds? and why does not Mademoiselle d'Eon return and put herself at the head of the *poissardes?* and carry over a code from that Maccabee, Lord George Gordon?

In short, is not France the most contemptible as well as the most *Iroquois* of nations? With any sense and any temper the *Etats* might have obtained a very reformed system of government: with none ready they threw down the whole fabric, and thought that the moment their tongues were loosened, they could prate themselves into a monarchic republic in which *Le Roi* was to intimidate all Europe, provided he was the tool of Mirabeau and such scoundrels, and of a parcel of abbés and philosophers who thought they could pick out a model from all the various visions and controversies on Government, and that a nation and all its laws, and all its debts, could wait till they had framed something on which no three of them would have agreed. I maintain that pert pedantry is the source of all their woes! and has unchained their natural insolent vindictive cruelty. They crouched under Maupeou and the Abbé Terray, who made the late King an absolute despot, and they treat the present inoffensive poor man as if he were a Louis Onze. They massacred poor old Foulon in the most savage manner, while Calonne

and the Archbishop of Sens laugh at their rage: but did not they coolly gag and butcher Lally, who, though a tyrant, like themselves, had great merit towards his country? The Duchess of Polignac, whom I do not excuse, they would have used, had she not escaped, as they did Brunehault and Fredegonde, and as they did not use Isabel of Bavaria, and Catherine of Medicis, who deserved no better,—but at times they are as abject as at other times they are merciless!

To me their great demerit is, that they disgrace the cause of liberty. In this paroxysm of anarchy they have murdered more persons without a shadow of trial, and in eight months, than are executed by legal forms at the instigation of a regular king in twenty years. If liberty is not tried by its peers, what matters whether there is one Nero, or a million?

2495. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 29, 1789.

I AM not at peace enough, Madam, to write much; yet, on the sole subject on which I can talk, it is a little relief to speak to those who know and feel how just my grief is; and as I ought to acknowledge your Ladyship's and Lord Ossory's letters, I will tell you the little I know. Lord Aylesford continued and does continue to pay every mark of respect and attention to dear Lord Waldegrave's memory and family. His Lordship and his brothers attended the burial last Friday; and his Lordship has been so friendly as to accept the guardianship of the children, so they will not quite want a father.

Poor Lady Waldegrave is not yet brought to bed, and they think will go a week longer still. I flatter myself the respite is favourable, as she has passed the first dreadful shock. Her command of herself is as reasonable as can be desired for her safety; to expect more than resignation and patience would be irrational. The Duchess stays till her delivery, and is so charmed with her melancholy submission to her fate, and with her piety, and with the enchanting goodness of Lord and Lady Aylesford, that in one of her letters to me she says, in her usual expressive style, "In short, to learn to live, or to learn to die, one must come to Packington."

I will endeavour, Madam, to imitate my nieces, and act with some reason, that is, so far suspend my sorrow as not to make it a

constant theme to others: though a thousand reasons make it a loss to me that I cannot cease to feel while I remain here · but I will be silent!—Your Ladyship's most devoted, &c.

2496. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 4, 1789.

I AM not surprised, my dear Madam, that the notice of my illness should have stimulated your predominant quality, your sensibility. I cannot do less in return than relieve it immediately, by assuring you that I am in a manner recovered; and should have gone out before this time, if my mind were as much at ease as my poor limbs. I have passed five months most uncomfortably; the two last most unhappily. In June and September I had two bad falls by my own lameness and weakness, and was much bruised; while I was witness to the danger, and then to the death, of my invaluable niece, Lady Dysart. She was angelic, and has left no children. The unexpected death of Lord Waldegrave,[1] one of the most amiable of men, has not only deprived me of him, but has opened a dreadful scene of calamities! He and my niece were the happiest and most domestic of couples.

Your kind inquiries after me have drawn these details from me, for which I make no excuse: good-nature never grudges its pity. I, who love to force your gravity to smile, am seriously better pleased to indulge your benevolence with a subject of esteem, which, though moving your compassion, will be accompanied by no compunction. I will now answer your letter. Your plea, that not composition, but business, has occasioned your silence, is no satisfaction to *me*. In my present anxious solitude I have again read 'Bonner' and 'Florio,' and the 'Bas Bleu;' and do you think I am pleased to learn that you have not been writing? Who is it says something like this line?—

> Hannah will *not* write, and Lactilla [2] *will*.

They who think her Earl Goodwin will outgo Shakspeare, might be in the right, if they specified in what way. I believe she may write

[1] George, fourth Earl of Waldegrave, born in 1751; married, in 1782, his cousin Lady Elizabeth Laura Waldegrave, daughter of James, the second Earl. He died on the 22nd of October, 1789.—WRIGHT.

[2] Lactilla, *i. e.* Mrs. Yearsley, the milkwoman.—CUNNINGHAM.

worse than he sometimes did, though that is not easy; but to excel him—oh! I have not words adequate to my contempt for those who can suppose such a possibility!

I am sorry, very sorry, for what you tell me of poor Barrett's fate. Though he did write worse than Shakspeare, it is great pity he was told so, as it killed him; and I rejoice that I did not publish a word in contradiction of the letters which he said Chatterton sent to me, as I was advised to do. I might have laughed at the poor man's folly, and then I should have been miserable to have added a grain to the poor man's mortification.[1]

You rejoice *me*, not my vanity, by telling me my idea of a mechanic succedaneum to the labour of Negroes is not visionary, but thought practicable. Oh! how I wish I understood sugar and ploughs, and could marry them! Alas! I understand nothing useful. My head is as un-mechanic as it is un-arithmetic, un-geometric, un-metaphysic, un-commercial: but will not some one of those superior heads to whom you have talked on my indigested hint reduce it to practicability? How a feasible scheme would stun those who call humanity romantic, and show, from the books of the Custom-house, that murder is a great improvement of the revenue! Even the present situation of France is favourable. Could not Mr. Wilberforce obtain to have the enfranchisement of the negroes started there? The Jews are claiming their natural rights there; and blacks are certainly not so great defaulters as the Hebrews, though they too have undergone ample persecutions. Methinks, as Lord George Gordon is in correspondence with the *États*, he has been a little remiss in not signing the petition of those of his new communion.

The *États* are detestable and despicable; and, in fact, guilty of the outrages of the Parisian and provincial mobs. The mob of twelve hundred, not legislators, but dissolvers of all laws, unchained the mastiffs that had been tied up, and were sure to worry all who fell in their way. To annihilate all laws, however bad, and to have none ready to replace them, was proclaiming anarchy. What should one think of a mad doctor, who should let loose a lunatic, suffer him to burn Bedlam, chop off the heads of the keepers, and then consult with some students in physic on the gentlest mode of treating delirium? By a late vote I see that the twelve hundred praters are

[1] Mr. Barrett was the person who first encouraged Chatterton to publish the poems which he attributed to Rowley. He was a respectable surgeon at Bristol.—Wright.

reduced to five hundred: *vive la reine Billingsgate!* the Thalestris who has succeeded Louis Quatorze! A committee of those Amazons stopped the Duke of Orleans, who, to use their style, I believe is not *a barrel the better herring.*

Your reflections on Vertot's passion for revolutions are admirable,[1] and yet it is natural for an historian to like to describe times of action. Halcyon days do not furnish matter for talents; they are like the virtuous couple in a comedy, a little insipid. Mr. Manly and Lady Grace, Mellefont and Cynthia, do not interest one much. Indeed, in a tragedy where they are unhappy, they give the audience full satisfaction, and no envy. The newspapers, no doubt, thought Dr. Priestley could not do better than to espouse you.[2] He certainly would be very judicious, could he obtain your consent; but, alas! you would soon squabble about Socinian*ism*, or some of those *isms*. To tell you the truth, I hate all those Constantinopolitan jargons, that set people together by the ears about pedantic terms. When you apply scholastic phrases as happily and genteelly as you do in your 'Bas Bleu,' they are delightful; but don't muddify your charming simplicity with controversial distinctions, that will sour your sweet piety. Sects are the bane of charity, and have deluged the world with blood.

I do not mean, by what I am going to say, to extort another letter from you before I have the pleasure of seeing you at Hampton; but I really shall be much obliged to you for a single line soon, only to tell me if Miss Williams is at Stoke with the Duchess of Beaufort. To a short note, cannot you add a short P. S. on the fate of 'Earl Goodwin?'[3]

Lac mihi—novum non frigore desit.

Adieu! my amiable friend! Yours most sincerely.

[1] Miss More, in her last letter, had said—"What a pity it is that Vertot is not alive! that man's element was a state convulsion; he hopped over peaceful intervals, as periods of no value, and only seemed to enjoy himself when all the rest of the world was sad. Storm and tempest were his halcyon days."—WRIGHT.

[2] In her letter to Walpole Miss More had said,—"I comforted myself, that your two fair wives the [Miss Berrys] were within reach of your elbow-chair, and that their pleasant society would somewhat mitigate the sufferings of your confinement. Apropos of two wives—when the newspapers the other day were pleased to marry me to Dr. Priestley, I am surprised they did not rather choose to bestow me on Mr. Madan, as *his* wife is probably better broken in to these Eastern usages, than Mrs. Priestley may be. I never saw the Doctor but once in my life, and he had then been married above twenty years." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 188.—WRIGHT.

[3] 'Earl Goodwin,' a tragedy, by Mrs. Yearsley, acted at Bath.—CUNNINGHAM.

2497. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sunday night, Nov. 8, 1789.

I HAVE not yet received that essential consolation, Madam, of Lady Waldegrave's being safely delivered; and they even think she may go on a month longer—a cruel suspense! But the Duchess says she is stronger, and in no danger of not being able to go through her labour; but after the false hopes we had of her Lord for three days, I am daunted, and dare not be sanguine.

Your Ladyship's letter, which I could not answer then, was very judicious, indeed, on the French *distractions*. *Distracted* they really seem, and worse than savages, for in a state of nature the hurt one man can do to his neighbour is very limited; but a whole nation turned loose to their passions, with all the implements of mischief that have been devised during the improvements of society, and groaning with resentments for oppression, is a million of times worse. Still I can excuse the mob sooner than the *États*, who proceed in rending all ties, and overturning all systems, without repairing or replacing any; and increase the confusion by new demolitions, so that I am sometimes tempted to refine so much as to suppose that the concealed friends of the Crown, the nobility and the Church, encourage the general extravagance, in hopes that all orders but the populace will unite, through interest and indignation, to restore the old system. This would have some meaning, though not easily put in practice, as the whole army has been inspired with the same fury as the mob.

Perhaps I am too candid, for the *États* set out so foolishly, that I know not why I should suspect them of any sense. Their early debate on the title of the King of Spain to the crown, and their discussion on their own King's style, were such characteristics of absurdity, that it is too charitable to impute a grain of sense to them. They might as well have agitated a question whether Louis-Seize should be called Louis-le-Gros, or Louis-le-Simple. One would think he had convoked his heralds, not his *États*. What would Europe have thought, if, when Sir E. Hawke burnt so many of their men-of-war, the French Academy had consulted how their new ships should be christened? That would have been a puerility worthy of the *Quarante*, and a theme for an epigram on them. The Jews, I see, have addressed those sage legislators—I do not wonder. *They* crucified their King, and called him, on his cross, King of the

Jews, not of Judæa; and no doubt, if the *poissardes* offered to deliver King Louis, the Hebrews would cry out, "Not him, but Lord George Barabbas."

I have still some acquaintance left in France for whom I feel much; some are come over or coming, as Mesdames de Boufflers, and the Duchesse de Lauzun, now Biron, and Madame de Cambis; I have not yet been able to go to them. There are some others who only make me smile, or worse. One is an old Abbesse de St. Antoine, sister of the Prince of Beauvau; she has sent her church-plate to the fund of contributions. You will be diverted by a story I will tell you of her. The last time I was in France, I went with Madame du Deffand to sup at Roissi, Monsieur de Caraman's, whose wife is sister of Madame de Cambis, and niece of the Beauvaus. There we found that old St. Antoine, and a nun instead of a pig. She had been at *les eaux*, and then they may sleep at a relation's on the road. I desired my dear old friend to present me to Madame l'Abbesse, and tell her how good her parents the Prince and Princesse de Craon had been to me formerly at Florence. The old she-hog drew up with all the pride of the House of Lorraine, of which she is a spurious twig, and replied, "*Je suis bien aise, Monsieur, que Monsieur mon père* (who was not her *père*) *et Madame ma mère ont eu*"—and then she paused—"l'avantage *de connoître Monsieur.*" Madame du Deffand, who could not bear her impertinence to me, cried out, "*Pardy, Madame, vous auriez bien pû dire* l'honneur."

I have not 'Anacharsis' here, Madam, but I recollect that Arsame was a flattering picture of Monsieur de Choiseul, who had great parts, and was not a severe minister, but very daring, dashing, and whose good nature would not have checked his ambition from doing any splendid mischief, or from spilling blood by battalions, though perhaps not by a bason-full. France owes much of its pecuniary distresses to his waste and political intrigues. From what an abyss have their extravagancies of all kinds saved us, if we have the wisdom to profit of our tranquillity and advantages! Among the greater points of security at home, of the safety of India, of our commerce extending as theirs must languish, and of the recovery of the empire of the ocean by the decay of their marine, we ought to reckon not only the influx of their money, but the retention of our own, which used to be lavished so widely in France. I made a random computation above twenty years ago (and calculation is not my bright side) that the English wasted annually in France above

500,000*l.* When I was there in 1765, their late king said that by the returns from Calais 40,000 English had passed through there, though but two years after the peace: if half were tradesmen, cooks, and barbers *pour s'instruire*, not one went and returned for so little as five pounds. Though that was a tide that had been dammed up, I believe the emigrations of late years have been as numerous. Two years ago there were above sixty English families at Nice; and a year ago there were said to be 40,000 English in France and Lorraine—numbers indeed from economy; but thrift itself does not live in France on French money, nor on what it proposes to save: nor is it easy to save, where everything is charged so high to a Milor Anglois. But I shall drop wisdom and supputation, and return to 'Anacharsis.' The Abbé Barthelemy was devoted to the Duchesse de Choiseul, and was always at Chanteloup, and she had obtained two or three emoluments for him: the incense to her husband, I believe, was offered in compliment to her.

To divert my thoughts a little in the many melancholy, lonely hours that I have passed in these three months, and to turn them to the only reading I could relish in the present position of Europe, modern history, I have been reading again, as I have often done, 'Voltaire's Universal History.' I suppose, from the various circumstances that have struck me with regard to the actual state of France, I admire it more than ever, though I always thought it his *chef d'œuvre*. It is a marvellous mass both of genius and sagacity, and the quintessence of political wisdom as well as of history. Any one chapter on a single reign, as those of Philip II., Henry IV., Richelieu, Elizabeth, Cromwell, is a complete picture of their characters and of their times. Whatever may be said of his incorrectness in some facts, his observations and inferences are always just and profound. I wish you would read it again, Madam; there are twenty passages that look as if written within these six months. More than once he allows the cruel nature of his countrymen in turbulent times. The story of the whole modern world is comprised in less space than that of the three centuries of diminutive Greece in the tedious Travels of Anacharsis, who makes you remember rather than reflect. On the other hand, I am sorry I cannot agree with your Ladyship; Mr. Gibbon never tires me. He comprises a vast body and period of history too; however, I do wish he had been as lucid as Voltaire, or, to speak more justly, that he had arranged his matter better, for by vast leaps backwards and forwards, or by not drawing nearer together contemporary times, you have forgotten the

personages to whom he returns; but how I run on! I fear my confinement and solitude have drawn me into trespassing on your Ladyship's patience: luckily my small paper reminds me that a letter is not a dissertation, though I doubt my close, little hand sometimes sufficiently gratifies its propensity to prattling, when it is in train.—Good night, Madam.

2498. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 26, 1789.

I DO not know in which of your palaces your Ladyship is resident at present; but, not having mentioned your return to Ampthill, I conclude you still in Northamptonshire. If I mistake, it will not signify; my letter, if stale by taking a circuit, will be just the same, for I have nothing fresh to tell you, Madam, and only answer a paragraph or two in your last, out of decorum.

I said nothing of the Duc d'Orleans, as knowing nothing, and from not thinking him worth inquiry. He appears to me like one of the two gentlemen who often open the first scene of a French tragedy, and then have no more part in the play. I have been twice in town to see three of the *refugees* with whom I used to live very much at Paris, the Comtesse de Boufflers, the Duchesse de Lauzun, now of Biron, and Madame de Cambis. I cannot say that they once named their princely ambassador. Madame de Boufflers has lost a great part of her income, and is mortified, as she may well be, at quitting her beautiful English *parc* at Auteuil. Indeed, the horrors they all relate make one abhor Lord Stanhope and his *priestly* firebrands who would raise Presbyterian conflagrations here. One story will touch you; the little dauphin, who is but four years old, and a beautiful child, was learning fables: the one in waiting ended by saying of the animal that was the subject of it, that, though she had had great misfortunes, she became at last *heureuse comme des reines*. He said, "Hah! toutes les reines ne sont pas heureuses, car maman pleure depuis le matin jusqu'au soir."

It was said a year ago that a whole *armoire* of Madame de Sevigné's letters to a Monsieur de la Grange had been found; but I did not believe it, nor have heard any more of them. I have two of her original letters; Lady Rivers brought me a long one the last time she was in England, but it is one of the printed. The other

the Comte de Grave obtained for me from Monsieur de Castellane, who married a granddaughter of Pauline; but it is one of the very *larmoyantes*, written at Nos Filles de St. Marie, on one of the days of Madame de Grignan's departures. I have, besides, an original letter of Madame de Maintenon, which was given to me at St. Cyr by one of the nuns; but I laid it up so carefully somewhere, that I cannot find it. Monsieur de Grave is an exceedingly good sort of man: he lodged at St. Joseph, in the apartment above Madame du Deffand, and was very intimate with her. It was he who went with me and Mrs. Cholmondeley and another English lady [in 1769] to St. Cyr, where we passed five hours, by permission of the Bishop of Chartres, and I sat in the Maintenon's own seat, during the mass, and afterwards heard the young ladies pensioners act dialogues written for them by their foundress, whom the abbess told me she remembered—but she seemed to remember nothing else!'

Taylor's book was shown to me this summer by one of those wiseacres that call themselves learned men, and who told me it was tremendous. I was neither alarmed nor curious: yet, on your Ladyship's notice, I borrowed the 'Monthly Review,' and find that the world's future religion is to be founded on a blundered translation of an almost unintelligible commentator on Plato. I guess, however, that the religion this new apostle recommends is, not belief in the pantheon of Pagan divinities, but the creed of the philosophers, who really did not believe in their idols, but whose metaphysics were frequently as absurd; and yet this half-witted Taylor prefers them to Bacon and Locke, who were almost the first philosophers who introduced common sense into their writings, and were as clear as Plato was unintelligible—because he did not understand himself. Taylor will have no success; not because nonsense is not suited to making Proselytes,—witness the Methodists, Moravians, Baron Swedenborg, and Loutherbourg the painter; but it should not be learned nonsense, which only the *literati* think they understand after long study. Absurdities, announced only to the ear, and easily retained by the memory, have other guess operation; not that I have any objection to Mr. Taylor's making proselytes—the more religions the better. If we had but two in the island, they would cut one another's throats for power. When there is plenty of beliefs, the professors only gain customers here and there from rival shops, and make more controversies than converts.

[1] See Vol. v., p. 191.—CUNNINGHAM.

Lady Waldegrave is not yet delivered, and her parting with the Duchess, who left her last week, was a great addition to her grief.

You order me to name my own health, and therefore I do, Madam. I am quite recovered; and, having just had a fit of the gout, I depend on its not returning and have ventured to stay here through all our deluges, and have not suffered in the least. It is very kind in your Ladyship to make that inquiry, but I cannot endure that jackanapes-paper 'The World,' notifying so extremely an unimportant circumstance as my recovery to so many persons who cannot possibly care a straw about me. A clergyman last week brought me three paragraphs that he had cut out of *Worlds* with my name in them. Surely the writer might knock down better game than an old valetudinarian sitting quietly by his fire-side in the country, and who never even sees his paper. It is very hard one may not be superannuated when one pleases!

2499. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 6, 1789.

I AM afraid, Madam, I can give but unsatisfactory answers to most of your Ladyship's questions, for my memory is much upon its wane; and my information is very slender. Both the King and Queen have been extremely concerned for Lord Waldegrave; and the King, I believe, did defer giving away the regiment for a month, that Lady Waldegrave might be benefited by the delay. She was brought to bed of a daughter on the 2nd, and I trust is in a good way.

My meaning about the Armada-tapestry, I suppose, was, that the Republic had more taste than James and Charles, and hung it where it would often be seen: no particular compliment could be meant to the House of Lords, which was no longer a House of Lords then—but I protest I cannot answer for what I said so long ago, and which was not worth a thought since.

I can still less give a positive answer about Mad. de Sevigné's letter, but that it is what I told your Ladyship, a *larmoyante* one, and not about any duel. I have entirely forgot how M. de Grave got it; and am quite ignorant whether the M. de Castellane whom I knew, is living or not. He was not a descendant of Pauline, but had married one. I never saw a picture of Pauline, nor do I know who possesses her house or Grignan. George Selwyn was at the latter, and has told me to whom it belongs—but it is gone out of my head.

I did hear of Lord Orford's letters on astronomy in a book of agriculture, but I have had too many deplorable proofs of his lunacy, to be curious after more.

The print of Necker I return, Madam, but I protest I do not understand any part of it—however, I am not sorry to see that even in such trumpery they imitate us clumsily.

The Berrys are at Teddington, and it is on their account that I have stayed here later than I ever did. They go to town next week, and so shall I. I hope I may not be quite so dry and dull there, as I am to-day; but if you had not ordered me to return the print, I think I should have postponed my *no* answers to your queries, for I am a total blank at present, and know nothing to amuse you. Indeed no mortal is so barren, when I have nothing at the point of my pen to say—when I have, it gallops sufficiently.

George [Selwyn] has called while I was writing, and says Grignan belongs now to a Monsieur Dorliere—or did before the *États* met—

> Hemp may grow now,—where Troy town stood!

2500. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 12, 1789.

I GIVE your Ladyship abundant thanks for your congratulations on Lady Waldegrave's delivery: she and her little orphan are well, and I trust safe.

I return your Ladyship the *Herveyan* letter, which is a more proper word than *frantic:* it did not surprise me at all: his father was always attempting to excite compassion by the most virulent abuse on his nearest relations. Besides, I have seen and received parallel epistles. I had one a year and a half ago: I made no answer, but told Mrs. E. Hervey, his mother's and his most kind friend, that I could not refuse giving a little money to a man of quality, with whose family I had been so much acquainted all my life; and did give her five guineas for him. He, I know from Lady Aylesbury, has grossly abused Mrs. E. Hervey since, to whom he has had great obligations. He wrote to me again this spring; I threw his letter into the fire, and sent no reply. I would not hinder Lord Ossory's charity, but he certainly had better not write, for when a gentleman can beg in that abject manner, he would probably print the letter, like many of those worthless beings, whose flattery and scurrility are employed indifferently for half-a-crown.

I was in town on Wednesday, and was told that the emperor had made a truce for two months with the Flemings, which was likely to be followed by a peace. I am glad that they will be relieved, and that *He* is baffled and mortified. There is as wide a difference between Joseph and Louis, as between their present situations. The latter, without being an aggressor, was willing to amend a very bad government, and has been treated like a Sicilian Dionysius, and has seen numbers of his innocent subjects massacred, &c. Joseph, with the flippancy of a French prater, has violated oaths and laws, and plundered, in order to support an unjust war of ambition, while he is the tool of the northern Semiramis, whom I call by a name that sounds quite Russian, *Catharine Slay-Czar,—à propos*, Madam, have you seen Mr. Cambridge's excellent verses, called 'The Progress of Liberty?' They were printed last Wednesday in a newspaper called 'The Times,' but there ascribed to a young lady. They are as happy a composition, in their way, as 'Bonner's Ghost.'

Have you heard, too, that one of the wings of Houghton, not Houghton your cousin, is burnt down? I know not by what accident. I said, burnt *down;* but stone walls, and such walls, are not easily consumed. In my father's time, one of the cellars was on fire, but only a door was destroyed. As the gallery is burnt, the glorious pictures have escaped—or are reserved to be consumed in a wooden palace on the first revolution at Petersburg.

You will please, Madam, to direct your next commands to Berkeley Square, whither I shall go on Tuesday for some time.—Yours, &c.

2501. TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.[1]

DEAR SIR, *Berkeley Square, Dec.* 15, 1789.

YOU will probably be surprised at not hearing from me so long. Indeed, I hope you will have been so, for as it has been occasioned by no voluntary neglect, I had rather you should have reproached me in your own mind, than have been thoughtless of me and indifferent.

The truth is, that between great misfortunes, accidents, and illness, I have passed six melancholy months. I have lost two of my nearest and most beloved relations, Lady Dysart and Lord Waldegrave. Her illness terminated but in September; his, besides the grievous

[1] Now first collected.—CUNNINGHAM.

loss of him, left me in the greatest anxiety for his widow, who thought herself at the end of her pregnancy, but was not delivered till above two months after his death, a fortnight ago.

In the midst of these distresses, I had two very bad falls in June and September, by which I bruised myself exceedingly, and the last of which brought on a fit of the gout. In such situations I was very incapable of entertaining any body, or even of being entertained, and saw but few of my own unhappy family; or I should have asked the favour of your company at Strawberry Hill.

I am now pretty well, and came to town but to-day, when I take the first moment of telling you so; that whenever you come to London, I may have a chance of having the pleasure of seeing you.

I am, with sincere regard and esteem, dear Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

2502. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 26, 1789.

End of an extraordinary year!

IT is too late in the month, Madam, to return your Christmas wishes, and too late in my life to repay your most agreeable new-year's-gift of Lord Holland's verses, which *talk* good sense with so much ease, that instead of prophesying that he will be a poet, I will boldly venture to foretell that he will be of a much higher class, and will be worthy of his grandfather and uncle. He cannot think half-a-quarter so well of me, if he imagines that I cared a straw about a trumpery pane of glass, that had actually been cracked and mended before.—

"The old man tells his story—"

but does not fret about a bit of painted glass, as Lord Holland will find, if he will do me the honour of coming again to Strawberry when I am there. He has made himself free of my house as a Noble Author, though I shall not live to record him.

Of the new noble authoress dowager I had not heard a word: be so good in your next, Madam, to tell me if her 'Tractate' (as Milton called his, and which I suppose was a more severe institution than her Ladyship's) is published, and by what title.

I did not know Mrs. Hervey's new novel was published yet; I saw it announced some time ago, but have forgotten the title: it

will keep cold. The former was well written, but the ideas very stale. I am tired of books that add nothing new to the mass. I cannot say the Princes are like our novels: their behaviour, though negative, has certainly introduced *variety* into *manners*. "Nous avons changé tout cela" is not very sage, when Europe is so disposed to *changer tout cela*.

The town says, but I cannot believe it, that the Brabanters have offered their vacant coronet to the Bishop of Osnaburg. Humphrey Duke of Gloucester espoused Duchess Jacqueline, but neither kept her nor the duchy. I have not looked on the map, but I think both Osnaburg and Hanover lie nearer to Vienna than Brabant. It seems to me too, that the right reverend father in God has a better chance than he would have of remaining sovereign of Flanders; for *bouleversées*, as Flanders and France are, our experience is not old enough yet to convince me that the fermentation in either, especially in the latter, will not have a notable revulsion. In France it is a frenzy, which I believe will have the same effect as in the human body—it will be cured or make the patient destroy himself. Their government was detestable, and might have been much corrected; but to dissolve all government, without the shadow of a system ready to replace it, and to imagine that twenty-four millions can be moulded into an entirely new constitution at once totally repugnant to every law that had existed; and that such bungling operators as *Messrs. les États* have shown themselves, can tinker up by detached votes such a frame of legislation as will suit so vast a kingdom, does not enter into my conception. They have really pleased nobody internally but the most ignorant and unhappy peasantry, who have been let loose from all restraints, and in a manner instructed to gratify their spleen. I pity them, who will probably be exposed to the still worse excesses of an army without discipline and without pay. But what signify my reveries? I shall neither live to see them hatched nor addled.

Many happy new-years to Ampthill, and a less unhappy one than the last half to—Yours, &c.

2503. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY

Berkeley Square, Dec. 30, 1789.

THOUGH I have nothing but thanks for Lord Holland's verses to send you, Madam, I must send them. I am extremely pleased with

his variety of metres, and, if I may decide, prefer his heroics. If I may criticise, his trochaics are not always perfect, now and then wanting a syllable, as in "I resolve to perform whatever's my duty," and the next, and in one or two others. I do not delight in that measure, but at least it should be complete to the ear. He is excellent in rhymes, and so is Lord Ossory, too, whose poetry I am very glad to have gained, by-the-bye. It is refreshing to read natural easy poetry, full of sense and humour, instead of that unmeaning, laboured, painted style, now in fashion, of the Della Cruscas and Co., of which it is impossible ever to retain a couplet, no more than one could remember how a string of emeralds and rubies were placed in a necklace. Poetry has great merit, if it is the vehicle and preservative of sense, but it is not to be taken in change for it.

I do not, certainly, mean to pay Lord Holland for his verses, by sending him my fourth volume, which, though in prose, is no work of sense; it is merely to complete his set of a register; and he shall have it, if your Ladyship will be so good as to tell me how to convey it.

A knock at the door saves your Ladyship and me from adding any nonsense to my letter.

2504. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 20, 1790.

It is very provoking that people must always be hanging or drowning themselves, or going mad, that you forsooth, Mistress, may have the diversion of exercising your pity and good-nature, and charity, and intercession, and all that bead-roll of virtues that make you so troublesome and amiable, when you might be ten times more agreeable by writing things that would not cost one above half-a-crown at a time. You are an absolutely walking hospital, and travel about into lone and bye places, with your doors open to house stray casualties! I wish at least that you would have some children yourself, that you might not be plaguing one for all the pretty brats that are starving and friendless. I suppose it was some such goody two or three thousand years ago that suggested the idea of an alma-mater, suckling the three hundred and sixty-five bantlings of the

Countess of Hainault. Well, as your newly-adopted pensioners have *two* babes, I insist on your accepting *two* guineas for them instead of one at present (that is, when you shall be present). If you cannot circumscribe your own charities, you shall not stint mine, Madam, who can afford it much better, and who must be dunned for alms, and do not scramble over hedges and ditches in searching for opportunities of flinging away my money on good works. I employ mine better at auctions, and in buying pictures and baubles, and hoarding curiosities, that in truth I cannot keep long, but that will last *for ever* in my catalogue, and make me immortal! Alas! will they cover a multitude of sins? Adieu! I cannot jest after *that* sentence. Yours sincerely.

2505. TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, June 25, 1790.

I AM glad at least that you was not fetched to town on last Tuesday, which was as hot as if Phaeton had once more gotten into his papa's curricle and driven it along the lower road; but the old King has resumed the reins again, and does not allow us a handful more of beams than come to our northern share. I am glad, too, that I was not summoned also to the *Fitzroyal* arrangement; it was better to be singed here, than exposed between two such fiery furnaces as Lady Southampton and my niece Keppel. I pity Charles Fox to be kept on the Westminster gridiron.[1] Before I came out of town, I was diverted by a story from the hustings: one of the mob called to Fox, "Well, Charley, are not you sick of your *coalition?*" "Poor gentleman!" cried an old woman in the crowd, "why should not he like a *collation?*"

I am very sorry Mrs. Damer is so tormented, but I hope the new inflammation will relieve her. As I was writing that sentence this morning, Mesdames de Boufflers came to see me from Richmond, and brought a Comte de Moranville to see my house. The puerile pedants of their États are going to pull down the statues of Louis Quatorze, like their silly ancestors, who proposed to demolish the tomb of John Duke of Bedford. The Vicomte de Mirabeau is

[1] At the close of the Westminster election, on the 2nd of July, the numbers were, for Mr. Fox 3516, Lord Hood 3217, and Mr. Horne Tooke 1697.—WRIGHT.

arrested somewhere for something, perhaps for one of his least crimes; in short, I am angry that the cause of liberty is profaned by such rascals. If the two German Kings make peace, as you hear and as I expected, the Brabanters, who seem not to have known much better what to do with their revolution, will be the first sacrifice on the altar of peace.

I stick fast at the beginning of the first volume of Bruce, though I am told it is the most entertaining; but I am sick of his vanity, and (I believe) of his want of veracity; I am sure, of his want of method and of his obscurity. I hope my wives were not at Park-place in your absence: the loss of them is irreparable to me, and I tremble to think how much more I shall feel it in three months, when I am to part with them for—who can tell how long? Adieu!

2506. TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, June 26, 1790.

I DO not forget your Lordship's commands, though I do recollect my own inability to divert you. Every year at my advanced time of life would make more reasonable my plea of knowing nothing worth repeating, especially at this season. The general topic of elections is the last subject to which I could listen: there is not one about which I care a straw; and I believe your Lordship quite as indifferent. I am not much more *au fait* of war or peace; I hope for the latter, nay and expect it, because it is not yet war. Pride and anger do not deliberate to the middle of the campaign; and I believe even the great incendiaries are more intent on making a good bargain than on saving their honour. If they save lives, I care not who is the better politician; and, as I am not to be their judge, I do not inquire what false weights they fling into the scales. Two-thirds of France, who are not so humble as I, seem to think they can entirely new-model the world with metaphysical compasses; and hold that no injustice, no barbarity, need to be counted in making the experiment. Such legislators are sublime empirics, and in their universal benevolence have very little individual sensibility. In short, the result of my reflections on what has passed in Europe for these latter centuries is, that tyrants have no consciences, and reformers no feeling; and the world suffers both by the plague and by the cure. What oceans of blood were Luther and Calvin the

authors of being spilt! The late French government was detestable; yet I still doubt whether a civil war will not be the consequence of the revolution, and then what may be the upshot? Brabant was grievously provoked; is it sure that it will be emancipated? For how short a time do people who set out on the most just principles, advert to their first springs of motion, and retain consistency? Nay, how long can promoters of revolutions be sure of maintaining their own ascendant? They are like projectors, who are commonly ruined; while others make fortunes on the foundation laid by the inventors.

2507. TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Wednesday night, July 1, 1790.

It is certainly not from having anything to tell you, that I reply so soon, but as the most agreeable thing I can do in my confinement. The gout came into my heel the night before last, perhaps from the deluge and damp. I increased it yesterday by limping about the house with a party I had to breakfast. To-day I am lying on the settee, unable to walk alone, or even to put on a slipper. However, as I am much easier this evening, I trust it will go off.

I do not love disputes, and shall not argue with you about Bruce; but, if you like him, you shall not choose an author for me. It is the most absurd, obscure, and tiresome book I know. I shall admire if you have a clear conception about most of the persons and matters in his work; but, in fact, I do not believe you have. Pray, can you distinguish between his *cock* and *hen* Heghes, and between all Yasouses and Ozoros? and do you firmly believe that an old man and his son were sent for and put to death, because the King had run into a thorn-bush, and was forced to leave his clothes behind him! Is it your faith, that one of their Abyssinian Majesties pleaded not being able to contribute towards sending for a new Abuna, because he had spent all his money at Venice in looking-glasses? And do you really think that Peter Paez was a Jack-of-all-trades, and built palaces and convents without assistance, and furnished them with his own hands? You, who are a little apt to contest most assertions, must have strangely let out your credulity! I could put forty questions to you as wonderful; and, for my part, could as soon credit * * * *.

I am tired of railing at French barbarity and folly. They are

more puerile now serious, than when in the long paroxysm of gay levity. Legislators, a senate, to neglect laws, in order to annihilate coats of arms and liveries! to pull down a King, and set up an Emperor! They are hastening to establish the tribunal of the prætorian guards; for the sovereignty, it seems, is not to be hereditary. One view of their Fête of the 14th,[1] I suppose, is to draw money to Paris; and the consequence will be, that the deputies will return to the provinces drunk with independence and self-importance, and will commit fifty-times more excesses, massacres, and devastations, than last year. George Selwyn says, that *Monsieur* the King's brother, is the only man of rank from whom they cannot take a title.

How frantickly have the French acted, and how rationally the Americans! But Franklin and Washington were great men. None have appeared yet in France; and Necker has only returned to make a wretched figure! He is become as insignificant as his King; his name is never mentioned, but now and then as disapproving something that is done. Why then does he stay? Does he wait to strike some great stroke, when everything is demolished? His glory, which consisted in being Minister though a Protestant, is vanished by the destruction of Popery; the honour of which, I suppose, he will scarce assume to himself. I have vented my budget, and now good night! I feel almost as if I could walk up to bed.

2508. TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, Saturday night, July 3, 1790.

How kind to write the very moment you arrived! but pray do not think that, welcome as your letters are, I would purchase them at the price of any fatigue to you—a proviso I put in already against moments when you may be more weary than by a journey to Lymington. You make me happy by the good accounts of Miss Agnes; and I should be completely so, if the air of the sea could be so beneficial to you both, as to make your farther journey unnecessary to your health, at least for some time; for—and I protest solemnly that not a personal thought enters into the consideration—I shall be excessively alarmed at your going to the Continent, when such a

[1] The grand federation in the Champ de Mars, on the anniversary of the taking of the Bastile.—Wright.

frenzy has seized it. You see by the papers, that the flame has burst out at Florence: can Pisa then be secure? Flanders can be no safe road; and is any part of France so? I told you in my last of the horrors at Avignon. At Madrid the people are riotous against the war with us, and prosecuted I am persuaded it will not be; but the demon of Gaul is busy everywhere. The *États*, who are as foolish as atrocious, have printed lists of the surnames which the late noblesse are to assume or resume; as if people did not know their own names. I like a speech I have heard of the Queen. She went with the King to see the manufacture of glass, and, as they passed the Halles, the poissardes huzzaed them; "Upon my word," said the Queen, "these folks are civiller when you visit them, than when they visit you." This marked both spirit and good-humour. For my part, I am so shocked at French barbarity, that I begin to think that our hatred of them is not national prejudice, but natural instinct; as tame animals are born with an antipathy to beasts of prey.

Mrs. Damer tells me in a letter to-day, that Lady Aylesbury was charmed with you both (which did not surprise either of us); and says she never saw two persons have so much taste for the country, who have no place of their own. It may be so; but, begging her Ladyship's pardon and yours, I think that people who have a place of their own, are mighty apt not to like any other.

I feel all the kindness at your determination of coming to Twickenham in August, and shall certainly say no more against it, though I am certain that I shall count every day that passes; and when *they are passed*, they will leave a melancholy impression on Strawberry, that I had rather have affixed to London. The two last summers were infinitely the pleasantest I ever passed here, for I never before had an agreeable neighbourhood. Still I loved the place, and had no comparisons to draw. Now, the neighbourhood will remain, and will appear ten times worse; with the aggravation of remembering two months that may have some transient roses, but, I am sure, lasting thorns. You tell me I do not write with my usual spirits: at least I will suppress, as much as I can, the want of them, though I am a bad dissembler.[1]

You do not mention the cathedral at Winchester, which I have

[1] In a letter written in this month to Walpole, Miss More asks, "Where and how are the Berrys? I hope they are within reach of your great chair, if you are confined, and of your airings, if you go abroad. I hate their going to Yorkshire; as Hotspur says, 'What do they do in the north, when they ought to be in the south?'" *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 235.—Wright.

twice seen and admired; nor do you say anything of Bevismount and Netley—charming Netley! At Lyndhurst you passed the palatial hovel of my Royal nephew [the Duke of Gloucester]; who I have reason to wish had never been so, and did all I could to prevent his being.

The week before last I met the Marlboroughs at Lady Di's. The Duchess[2] desired to come and see Strawberry again, as it had rained the whole time she was here last. I proposed the next morning: no, she could not; she expected company to dinner; she believed their brother, Lord Robert,[3] would dine with them: I thought that a little odd, as they have just turned him out for Oxfordshire; and I thought a dinner no cause at the distance of four miles. In her Grace's dawdling way, she could fix no time: and so on Friday, at half an hour after seven, as I was going to Lady North's, they arrived; and the sun being setting, and the moon not risen, you may judge how much they could see through all the painted glass by twilight.

2509. TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, August 9, at night, 1790.

Mr. Nicholls has offered to be postman to you; *whereof,* though I have nothing, or as little as nothing, to say, I thought *as how* it would look kinder to send nothing in writing than by word of mouth.

Nothing the first. So the Peace is made, and the Stocks drank its health in a bumper; but when they waked the next morning, they found they had reckoned without their host, and that their Majesties the King of big Britain and the King of little Spain have agreed to make peace some time or other, if they can agree upon it: and so the Stocks drew in their horns: but, having great trust in some time or other, they only fell two pegs lower. I, who never believed there would be war, kept my prophetic stocks up to par, and my consol—ation still higher; for when Spanish pride truckles, and English pride has had the honour of bullying, I dare to say we shall be content with the ostensible triumph, as Spain will be with some secret article that will leave her much where she was before. Vide Falkland's Island.

[1] Compare note [1] vol. i. p. lxxvii.—Cunningham.
[2] Lady Caroline Russell; married, in 1762, to the Duke of Marlborough.—Wright.
[3] Lord Robert Spencer, brother of the Duke of Marlborough.—Wright.

Nothing the second. Miss Gunning's match with Lord Blandford. You asserted it so peremptorily, that, though I doubted it, I quoted you. Lo! it took its rise solely in poor old Bedford's dotage, that still harps on conjunctions copulative, but now disavows it, as they say, on a remonstrance from her daughter.

Nothing the third. Nothing will come of nothing, says King Lear, and your humble servant.

2510. TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 12, 1790.

I MUST not pretend any longer, my dear Lord, that this region is void of news and diversions. Oh! we can innovate as well as neighbouring nations. If an Earl Stanhope, though he cannot be a tribune, is ambitious of being a plebeian, he may without a law be as vulgar as heart can wish; and, though we have not a national assembly to lay the axe to the root of nobility, the peerage have got a precedent for laying themselves in the kennel. Last night the Earl of Barrymore was so humble as to perform a buffoon-dance and act Scaramouch in a pantomime at Richmond for the benefit of Edwin, jun., the comedian:[1] and I, like an old fool, but calling myself a philosopher that loves to study human nature in all its disguises, went to see the performance.

Mr. Gray thinks that some Milton or some Cromwell may be lost to the world under the garb of a ploughman. Others may suppose that some excellent jack-pudding may lie hidden under red velvet and ermine. I cannot say that by the experiment of last night the latter hypothesis has been demonstrated, any more than the inverse proposition in France, where, though there seem to be many as bloody-minded rascals as Cromwell, I can discover none of his abilities. They have settled nothing like a constitution; on the contrary, they seem to protect everything but violence, as much as they can, in order to keep their louis a day, which is more than two-thirds of the Assembly perhaps ever saw in a month. I do not love legislators that pay themselves so amply! They might have had as good a constitution as twenty-four millions of people

[1] In the following month 'The Follies of a Day' was performed at Lord Barrymore's private theatre, at Wergrave. "His lordship, in the character of the gardener," according to the newspapers, "was highly comic, and his humour was not overstrained: the whole concluded with a dance, in which was introduced a favourite *pas Russe*, by Lord Barrymore and Mr. Delpini, which kept the theatre in a roar."—WRIGHT.

could comport. As they have voted an army of an hundred and fifty thousand men, I know what their constitution will be, after passing through a civil war. In short, I detest them: they have done irreparable injury to liberty, for no monarch will ever summon *États* again; and all the real service that will result from their fury will be, that every King in Europe, for these twenty or perhaps thirty years to come, will be content with the prerogative he has, without venturing to augment it.

The Empress of Russia has thrashed the King of Sweden; and the King of Sweden has thrashed the Empress of Russia. I am more glad that both are beaten than that either is victorious; for I do not, like our newspapers, and such admirers, fall in love with heroes and heroines who make war without a glimpse of provocation. I do like *our* making peace, whether we have provocation or not. I am forced to deal in European news, my dear Lord, for I have no homespun. I don't think my whole inkhorn could invent another paragraph; and therefore I will take my leave, with (your Lordship knows) every kind wish for your health and happiness.[1]

2511. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 30, 1790.

To be sure, I am glad you have been delighted with your travels; but Lord! Madam, how could you think (perhaps you did not think) of being pleased with beauties and prospects at home? Mr. Gilpin has more taste; he despised the richness, verdure, amenity of Richmond Hill, when he had seen rocks and lakes in the north; for size and distance of place add wonderfully to loveliness. From your first letter, I had more hopes of you: you were shocked at the rude mechanics, who thrust their callous hands into Dame Nature's bosom, and tear away all her dugs to get at her iron ribs, for the vile purposes of commerce and luxury; but you have relapsed, and are enchanted with Wales, and Chirk Castle, and twenty baubles, that everybody may visit in a week's time, without risk, and without the chance of a single hyæna running against your leg, as you went to your lodging at night. Can you boast of having discovered the

[1] This appears to have been the last letter addressed by Walpole to the Earl of Strafford. His lordship died at Wentworth Castle, on the 10th of March following, in his seventy-ninth year.—Wright.

source of the Dee or the Severn, which was not achieved by all antiquity, nor can be paralleled by all posterity, though the inhabitants of all the Welsh counties, that is the Gallà, have, or may have seen those sources every day since the beginning of time? I will say no more on that subject, Madam, though I could write five volumes in quarto to show, by precedent, that you ought first to have gone to Dover Castle or Fountains Abbey, however far out of your way, and though you could have said nothing new about them; and to have given an account of the trade of the Irish Channel, before you sought any river on this side of it.

I firmly believe all the beauties of Wales, and regret having never seen them while I was able, especially Picton Castle, the seat of my maternal ancestry, from a window of which one of my grandsires, Sir Richard Phillips, who was no taller than I am broad, was dragged and made prisoner by a colonel of the Republicans, while parleying about a surrender, when besieged by them.

Of the charms of Chirk Castle, I never heard before; but how few have eyes! and till somebody has, the rest only look, till they have been taught to see, by hearing others have seen. Of Nuneham, I doubt, you were not half so fond as I am. It is not superb, but so calm, *riant*, and comfortable, so live-at-able, one wakes in a morning on such a whole picture of beauty!

Your Ladyship's story of Mrs. Hodges rousing Lady Ravensworth at midnight, to borrow a pack of cards, reminds me of the Duke of Wharton, who knocked up his guardian, whom he hated, in the middle of the night, to borrow a pin; but, pray, does she *order* supper for *six* at Lady Ravensworth's, too?

To Lady *Ambrosia* Sydney I am an utter stranger; I suppose she was not Sir Henry, but Sir *Nectar* Sydney's daughter.

I am as little acquainted with Miss Ponsonby and Miss Buttershaw; I think I saw something in a newspaper about them, but I mind so little what I read there, that it made no impression, nor did I recollect to inquire; so your Ladyship has told me more than I can possibly tell you of them. Are they relations of her you call the *beautiful* Countess Talbot?

Poor St. Winifrede and poor Wynnstay! *sic transit gloria mundi*, and of those who never were *in mundo*. Who is it says, that crowned heads and cane heads must equally come to the ground? Sir Watkyn's father was called Prince of Wales: the head of its last sovereign did not come to the ground, but was fixed on the rails of the Tower—the present era is preaching moral lessons to all of the

calling, and St. Winifrede is lucky to be out of danger—'tis well for her she is not at Avignon! There are fresh horrors from that neighbourhood; and Paris is in such a ferment that new swarms of French are flocking hither; but I have been so ample in my answer to your Ladyship's two entertaining letters, that I have not left myself an inch of paper to say more. Oh! here is half of my paper that I thought filled, untouched! I perceive I had folded it back as soon as I had written the first page; and as I wrote my letter late at night to be ready for our early post next morning, I was half asleep, and dreamt I had scribbled the whole sheet. Well, Madam, all the mishap will be, that you will have my news as dry as a chip before you receive it.

At Marseilles—I think it was at Marseilles—a Monsieur Cazalet, and of his name I am not sure, to secure himself (being known, I suppose, for no friend to the Chaos), had just taken the civic oath, and thereupon had been invited to dine with the *maire!* On a sudden they heard a violent clamour in the street, and, opening the window, beheld a furious mob, who being asked what they wanted, answered, "The head of Cazalet." On that he was concealed; but the savages broke in, found him, dragged him down stairs by his hair, and then by one leg through the streets, till he lost his senses, when, putting a rope round his neck, they were going to despatch him; but two grenadiers, shocked at such barbarities, drew their sabres, rescued the sufferer, kept off the ruffians, and conveyed the poor martyr into a house: but he expired the moment he arrived!

At Paris, I have told you, Madam, confusion increases. A formal denunciation has been made to the domineering tribunal against Necker, who is accused of having advanced a million of livres to La Fayette, for the purpose of exciting or promoting the revolt in Brabant—how justly I know not; but when anarchy is abroad, its centurions are not a whit more safe than their antagonists. There is a sentence in 'Juvenal' that Lord Ossory will translate, that comprises the whole code of such times,

"—— Verso pollice vulgi
Quemlibet occidunt populariter—"

What a nation are the French! Sometimes carrying slavery to idolatry of their tyrants; sometimes gorging their native insolence with all the extravagance of cruelty!

2512. TO SIR DAVID DALRYMPLE

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 21, 1790.

So many years, Sir, have elapsed since I saw Burleigh, that I cannot in general pretend to recollect the pictures well. I do remember that there was a surfeit of pieces by Luca Giordano and Carlo Dolce, no capital masters, and posterior to the excellent. *The* Earl of Exeter, who resided long at Rome in the time of those two painters, seemed to have employed them entirely during his sojourn there. I was not struck more than you, Sir, with the celebrated 'Death of Seneca,' though one of the best works of Jordano. Perhaps Prior's verses lifted it to part of its fame, though even those verses are inferior to many of that charming poet's compositions. Upon the whole, Burleigh is a noble palace, contains many fine things, and the inside court struck me with admiration and reverence.

The 'Shakspeare Gallery' is truly most inadequate to its prototypes; but how should it be worthy of them! If we could recall the brightest luminaries of painting, could they do justice to Shakspeare? Was Raphael himself as great a genius in his art as the author of 'Macbeth?' and who could draw Falstaff, but the writer of Falstaff? I am entirely of your opinion, Sir, that two of Northcote's pictures, from 'King John' and 'Richard the Third,' are at the head of the collection. In Macklin's 'Gallery of Poets and Scripture,' there are much better pictures than at Boydell's. Opie's 'Jepthah's Vow' is a truly fine performance, and would be so in any assemblage of paintings; as Sir Joshua's 'Death of Beaufort' is worthy of none: the Imp is burlesque, and the Cardinal seems terrified at him as before him, when the Imp is behind him. In Sir Thomas Hanmer's edition there is a print that gives the fact simply, pathetically, and with dignity, and just as you wish it told.

My sentiments on French politics concur as much with yours as they do on the subjects above. The National Assembly set out too absurdly and extravagantly, not to throw their country into the last confusion; which is not the way of correcting a government, but more probably of producing a worse, bad as the old was, and thence they will have given a lasting wound to liberty: for what king will ever call *États* again, if he can possibly help it? The new legislators

were pedants, not politicians, when they announced the equality of all men. We are all born so, no doubt, abstractedly; and physically capable of being kept so, were it possible to establish a perfect government, and give the same education to all men. But are they so in the present constitution of society, under a bad government, where most have had no education at all, but have been debased, brutified, by a long train and mixture of superstition and oppression, and witnesses to the luxury and vices of their superiors, which they could only envy and not enjoy? It was turning tigers loose; and the degradation of the nobility pointed out the prey. Could it be expected that savages so hallooed on to outrage and void of any notions of reciprocal duties and obligations, would fall into a regular system of acting as citizens under the government of reason and justice? It was tearing all the bonds of society, which the experience of mankind had taught them were necessary to the mutual convenience of all; and no provision, no security, was made for those who were levelled, and who, though they enjoyed what they had by the old constitution, were treated, or were exposed to be treated, as criminals. They have been treated so: several have been butchered; and the National Assembly dare not avenge them, as they should lose the favour of the intoxicated populace. That conduct was senseless, or worse. With no less folly did they seem to expect that a vast body of men, more enlightened, at least, than the gross multitude, would sit down in patience under persecution and deprivation of all they valued; I mean the nobility and clergy, who might be stunned, but were sure of reviving and of burning with vengeance. The insult was the greater, as the subsequent conduct of the National Assembly has proved more shamefully dishonest, in their paying themselves daily more than two-thirds of them ever saw perhaps in a month; and that flagitious self-bestowed stipend, as it is void of all patriotic integrity, will destroy their power too; for, if constitution-making is so lucrative a trade, others will wish to share in the plunder of their country too; and, even without a civil war, I am persuaded the present Assembly will neither be septennial, nor even triennial.

2513. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Sunday, Oct. 10, 1790. *The day of your departure.*

Is it possible to write to my beloved friends, and refrain from speaking of my grief for losing you; though it is but the continuation of what I have felt ever since I was stunned by your intention of going abroad this autumn? Still I will not tire you with it often. In happy days I smiled, and called you my dear wives: now I can only think on you as darling children of whom I am bereaved! As such I have loved and do love you; and, charming as you both are, I have had no occasion to remind myself that I am past seventy-three. Your hearts, your understandings, your virtues, and the cruel injustice of your fate,[1] have interested me in everything that concerns you; and so far from having occasion to blush for any unbecoming weakness, I am proud of my affection for you, and very proud of your condescending to pass so many hours with a very old man, when everybody admires you, and the most insensible allow that your good sense and information (I speak of both) have formed you to converse with the most intelligent of our sex as well as your own; and neither can tax you with airs of pretension or affectation. Your simplicity and natural ease set off all your other merits—all these graces are lost to me, alas! when I have no time to lose.

Sensible as I am to my loss, it will occupy but part of my thoughts, till I know you safely landed, and arrived safely at Turin. Not till you are there, and I learn so, will my anxiety subside and settle into steady, selfish sorrow. I looked at every weathercock as I came along the road to-day, and was happy to see every one point north-east. May they do so to-morrow!

I found here the frame for Wolsey, and to-morrow morning Kirgate will place him in it; and then I shall begin pulling the little parlour to pieces, that it may be hung anew to receive him. I have also obeyed Miss Agnes, though with regret; for, on trying it, I found her Arcadia[2] would fit the place of the picture she condemns, which shall therefore be hung in its room; though the latter should

[1] This alludes to Miss Berry's father having been disinherited by an uncle, to whom he was heir at law, and a large property left to his younger brother.—M. B.

[2] A drawing by Miss Agnes Berry.—Wright.

give way to nothing else, nor shall be laid aside, but shall hang where I shall see it almost as often. I long to hear that its dear paintress is well; I thought her not at all so last night. You will tell me the truth, though she in her own case, and in that alone, allows herself mental reservation.

Forgive me for writing nothing to-night but about you two and myself. Of what can I have thought else? I have not spoken to a single person but my own servants since we parted last night. I found a message here from Miss Howe[1] to invite me for this evening —do you think I have not preferred staying at home to write to you, as this must go to London to-morrow morning by the coach to be ready for Tuesday's post? My future letters shall talk of other things, whenever I know anything worth repeating; or perhaps any trifle, for I am determined to forbid myself lamentations that would weary you; and the frequency of my letters will prove there is no forgetfulness. If I live to see you again, you will then judge whether I am changed; but a friendship so rational and so pure as mine is, and so equal for both, is not likely to have any of the fickleness of youth, when it has none of its other ingredients. It was a sweet consolation to the short time that I may have left, to fall into such a society; no wonder then that I am unhappy at that consolation being abridged. I pique myself on no philosophy, but what a long use and knowledge of the world had given me—the philosophy of indifference to most persons and events. I do pique myself on not being ridiculous at this very late period of my life; but when there is not a grain of passion in my affection for you two, and when you both have the good sense not to be displeased at my telling you so, (though I hope you would have despised me for the contrary,) I am not ashamed to say that your loss is heavy to me; and that I am only reconciled to it by hoping that a winter in Italy, and the journeys and sea air, will be very beneficial to two constitutions so delicate as yours. Adieu! my dearest friends: it would be tautology to subscribe a name to a letter, every line of which would suit no other man in the world but the writer.

[1] Julia Howe, an unmarried sister of Admiral Earl Howe, who lived at Richmond. —Wright.

2514. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Sunday, Oct. 31, 1790.

Perhaps I am unreasonably impatient, and expect letters before they can come. I expected a letter from Lyons three days ago, though Mrs. Damer told me I should not have one till to-morrow. I have got one to-day; but alas! from Pougues only, eleven and a half posts short of Lyons! Oh! may Mrs. Damer prove in the right to-morrow! Well! I must be happy for the past; and that you had such delightful weather, and but one little accident to your carriage. We have had equal summer till Wednesday last, when it blew a hurricane. I said to it, "Blow, blow, thou winter wind, I don't mind you now!" but I have not forgotten Tuesday the 12th; and now I hope it will be as calm as it is to-day on Wednesday next, when Mrs. Damer is to sail.[1] I was in town on Thursday and Friday, and so were her parents, to take our leaves; as we did on Friday night, supping all at Richmond-house. She set out yesterday morning, and I returned hither. I am glad you had the amusement of seeing the National Assembly. Did Mr. Berry find it quite so august as he intended it should be? Burke's pamphlet is to appear to-morrow, and Calonne has published a thumping one of four hundred and forty pages.[2] I have but begun it, for there is such a quantity of calculations, and one is forced to bait so often to boil milliards of livres down to a rob of pounds sterling, that my head is only filled with figures instead of arguments, and I understand arithmetic less than logic.

Our war still hangs by a hair, they say; and that this approaching week must terminate its fluctuations. Brabant, I am told, is to be pacified by negotiations at the Hague. Though I talk like a newspaper, I do not assume their airs; nor give my intelligence of any sort for authentic, unless when the 'Gazette' endorses the articles. Thus, Lord Louvain is made Earl of Beverley, and Lord, Earl of Digby; but in no Gazette, though still in the Songs of Sion, do I find that Miss Gunning is a marchioness. It is not that I suppose you care who gains a step in the aristocracy; but I tell you these

[1] Mrs. Damer was going to pass the winter at Lisbon, on account of her health.—Berry.

[2] This was his 'Lettre sur l'État de la France, présent et à venir;' of which a translation appeared in the following year.—Wright.

trifles to keep you *au courant*, and that at your return you may not make only a baronial curtsey, when it should be lower by two rows of ermine to some new-hatched countess. This is all the news-market furnishes.

Your description of the National Assembly and of the Champ de Mars were both admirable; but the altar of boards and canvass seems a type of their perishable constitution, as their air-balloons were before. French visions are generally full of vapour, and terminate accordingly. I have been at Mrs. Grenville's [1] this evening, who had a small party for the Duchess of Gloucester: there were many inquiries after *my wives*.

2515. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Park Place, Nov. 8, 1790.

No letter since Pougues! I think you can guess how uneasy I am! It is not the fault of the wind; which has blown from every quarter. To-day I cannot hear, for no post comes in on Mondays. What can have occasioned my receiving no letter from Lyons, when, on the 18th of last month, you were within twelve posts of it? I am now sorry I came hither, lest by my change of place a letter may have shuttlecocked about, and not have known where to find me; and yet I left orders with Kirgate to send it after me, if one came to Strawberry on Saturday. I return thither to-morrow, but not till after the post is come in here. I am writing to you now, while the company are walked out, to divert my impatience; which, however, is but a bad recipe, and not exactly the way to put you out of my head.

The first and great piece of news is the pacification with Spain. The courier arrived on Thursday morning with a most acquiescent answer to our ultimatum: what that was I do not know, nor much care. Peace contents me, and for my part I shall not haggle about the terms. I have a good general digestion, and it is not a small matter that will lie at my stomach when I have no hand in dressing the ingredients.

The pacification of Brabant is likely to be volume the second.

[1] Margaret Banks, widow of the Hon. Henry Grenville, who died in 1784. Their only daughter was married, in 1781, to Viscount Mahon, afterwards Earl Stanhope.—Wright.

The Emperor, and their Majesties of Great Britain and Prussia, and his Serene Highness the Republic of Holland have sent a card to his turbulent Lowness of Brabant, that they allow him but three weeks to submit to his old sovereign; on promise of a general pardon —or the choice of threescore thousand men ready to march without a pardon.

The third volume, expected, but not yet in the press, is a counter-revolution in France. Of that I know nothing but rumour; yet it certainly is not the most incredible event that rumour ever foretold. In this country the stock of the National Assembly is fallen down to bankruptcy. Their only renegade, aristocrat Earl Stanhope, has, with D. W. Russel, scratched his name out of the Revolution Club; but the fatal blow has been at last given by Mr. Burke. His pamphlet[1] came out this day se'nnight, and is far superior to what was expected, even by his warmest admirers. I have read it twice; and though of three hundred and fifty pages, I wish I could repeat every page by heart. It is sublime, profound, and gay. The wit and satire are equally brilliant; and the whole is wise, though in some points he goes too far: yet in general there is far less want of judgment than could be expected from *him*. If it could be translated, —which, from the wit and metaphors and allusions, is almost impossible,—I should think it would be a classic book in all countries, except in *present* France.[2] To their tribunes it speaks daggers; though, unlike them, it uses none. Seven thousand copies have been taken off by the booksellers already, and a new edition is preparing. I hope you will see it soon. There ends my gazette.

There is nobody here at present but Mrs. Hervey, Mrs. E. Hervey, and Mrs. Cotton: but what did I find on Saturday? Why, the Prince of Furstemberg,[3] his son, and son's governor! I was ready to turn about and go back; but they really proved not at all unpleasant. The ambassador has not the least German stiffness or hauteur; is extremely civil, and so domestic a man, that he talked comfortably of his wife and eight children, and of his fondness for them. He understands English, though he does not speak it. The

[1] Burke's 'Reflections on the Revolution in France.'—Wright.

[2] A French translation, by M. Dupont, shortly after made its appearance, and spread the reputation of the work over all Europe. The Emperor of Germany, Catherine of Russia, and the French Princes transmitted to Mr. Burke their warm approbation of it, and the unfortunate Stanislaus of Poland sent him his likeness on a gold medal.—Wright.

[3] The Landgrave of Furstemberg had been sent from the Emperor Leopold to notify his being elected King of the Romans, and his subsequent coronation as Emperor of Germany.—Wright.

son, a good-humoured lad of fifteen, seems well-informed: the governor, a middle-aged officer, speaks English so perfectly, that even by his accent I should not have discovered him for a foreigner. They stayed all night, and went to Oxford next morning before I rose.

Nov. 9th, at night.

This morning, before I left Park-place, I had the relief and joy of receiving your letter of October 24, from Lyons. It would have been still more welcome, if dated from Turin; but, as you have met with no impediments so far, I trust you got out of France as well as through it. I do hope, too, that Miss Agnes is better, as you say; but when one is very anxious about a person, credulity does not take long strides in proportion. I am not surprised at your finding voiturins, or anybody, or anything dearer: where all credit and all control are swept away, every man will be a tyrant in proportion to his necessities and his strength. Societies were invented to temperate force: but it seems force was liberty, and much good may it do the French with being delivered from everything but violence!—which I believe they will soon taste pro and con.! You make me smile by desiring me to continue my affection. Have I so much time left for inconstancy? For threescore years and ten I have not been very fickle in my friendships: in all those years I never found such a pair as you and your sister. Should I meet with a superior pair,—but they must not be deficient in any one of the qualities which I find in you two,—why, perhaps, I may change; but, with that double mortgage on my affections, I do not think you are in much danger of losing them. You shall have timely notice if a second couple drops out of the clouds and falls in my way.

2516. TO MISS BERRY.

Nov. 11, 1790.

I HAD a letter from Mrs. Damer at Falmouth. She suffered much by cold and fatigue, and probably sailed on Saturday evening last, and may be at Lisbon by this time, as you, I trust, are in Italy.

Mr. Burke's pamphlet has quite turned Dr. Price's head. He got upon a table at their club, toasted to our Parliament becoming a National Assembly, and to admitting no more peers of their assembly, having lost the only one they had. They themselves are very like

the French *États*: two more members got on the table (their pulpit), and broke it down:—so be it!

The Marquisate[1] is just where it was—to be and not to be. The Duchess of Argyll is said to be worse. Della Crusca[2] has published a poem, called 'The Laurel of Liberty,' which, like the Enragés, has confounded and overturned all ideas. There are *gossamery tears* and *silky oceans*—the first time, to be sure, that anybody ever *cried cobwebs*, or that the *sea* was made of *paduasoy*.[3] There is, besides, a violent tirade against a considerable personage, who, it is supposed, the author was jealous of, as too much favoured a few years ago by a certain Countess. You may guess why I am not more explicit: for the same reason I beg you not to mention it at all; it would be exceedingly improper. As the Parliament will meet in a fortnight, and the town be plumper, my letters may grow more amusing; though, unless the weather grows worse, I shall not contribute my leanness to its *embonpoint*. Adieu!

2517. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Thursday, Nov. 18, 1790.

On Tuesday morning, after my letter was gone to the post, I received yours of the 2nd (as I have all the rest) from Turin, and it gave me very little of the joy I had so much meditated to receive from a letter thence. And why did not it?—because I had got one on Saturday, which anticipated and augmented all the satisfaction I had allotted for Turin. You will find my Tuesday's letter, if ever you receive it, intoxicated with Chamberri; for which, and all your kind punctuality, I give you a million of thanks. But how cruel to

[1] Meaning the reported marriage of Miss Gunning to the Marquis of Blandford.—Berry.

[2] Robert Merry, Esq., the object of the caustic satire of the author of the 'Baviad and Mæviad'—

> Lo, Della Crusca! in his closet pent,
> He toils to give the crude conception vent:
> Abortive thoughts, that right and wrong confound,
> Truth sacrificed to letters, sense to sound;
> False glare, incongruous images combine,
> And noise and nonsense clatter through the line.

—Wright.

[3] Besides the above, Mr. Gifford instances, from the same poem, "moody monarchs, radiant rivers, cooling cataracts, lazy Loires, gay Garonnes, glossy glass, mingling murder, dauntless day, lettered lightnings, delicious dilatings, sinking sorrows, real reasoning, meliorating mercies, dewy vapours damp that sweep the silent swamps, &c. &c." —Wright.

find that you found none of my letters at Turin! There ought to have been two at least, of October the 16th and 19th. I have since directed one thither of the 25th; but, alas! from ignorance, there was *par Paris* on none of them; and the Lord knows at how many little German courts they may have been baiting! I shall put *par Paris* on this; but beg you tell me, as soon as you can, which route is the shortest and the safest; that is, by which you are most likely to receive them. You do me justice in concluding there has been no negligence of mine in the case; indeed, I have been ashamed at the multiplicity of my letters, when I had scarce anything to tell you but my own anxiety to hear of your being quietly settled at Florence, out of the reach of all commotions. And how could I but dread your being molested by some accident, in the present state of France? and how could your healths mend in bad inns, and till you can repose somewhere? Repose you will have at Florence, but I shall fear the winter for you there: I suffered more by cold there, than by any place in my life; and never came home at night without a pain in my breast, which I never felt elsewhere, yet then I was very young and in perfect health. If either of you suffer there in any shape, I hope you will retire to Pisa.

My inquietude, that presented so many alarms to me before you set out, has, I find, and am grieved for it, not been quite in the wrong. Some inconveniences I am persuaded you have sunk: yet the difficulty of landing at Dieppe, and the ransack of your poor harmless trunks at Bourgoin, and the wretched lodgings with which you were forced to take up at Turin, count deeply with me; and I had much rather have lost all credit as a prophet, since I could not prevent your journey. May it answer for your healths! I doubt it will not in any other respect, as you have already found by the voiturins. In point of pleasure, is it possible to divest myself so radically of all self-love as to wish you may find Italy as agreeable as you did formerly? In all other lights, I do most fervently hope there will be no drawbacks on your plan. Should you be disappointed any way, you know what a warm heart is open to receive you back; and so will *your own* Cliveden [Little Strawberry Hill] be too.

I am glad you met the Bishop of Arras,[1] and am much pleased that he remembers me. I saw him very frequently at my dear old friend's [Madame du Deffand], and liked him the best of all the

[1] M. de Conzies. This amiable prelate declined, in 1801, the Parisian archiepiscopacy, proffered him by Buonaparte, and died in London, in December 1804, in the arms of Monsieur, afterwards Charles the Tenth.—WRIGHT.

Frenchmen I ever knew. He is extremely sensible, easy, lively, and void of prejudices. Should he fall in your way again, I beg you will tell him how sincere a regard I have for him. He lived in the strictest union with his brother, the Archbishop of Tours, whom I was much less acquainted with, nor know if he be living.

I have heard nothing since my Tuesday's letter. As I still hope its predecessors will reach you, I will not repeat the trifling scraps of news I have sent you in them. In fact, this is only a trial whether *par Paris* is a better passport than a direction without it; but I am grievously sorry to find difficulty of correspondence superadded to the vexation of losing you. Writing to you was grown my chief occupation. I wish Europe and its broils were in the East Indies, if they embarrass us quiet folks, who have nothing to do with their squabbles. The Duchess of Gloucester, who called on me yesterday, charged me to give her compliments to you both. Miss Foldson[1] has not yet sent me your pictures: I was in town on Monday, and sent to reproach her with having twice broken her promise: her mother told my servant that Miss was at Windsor, drawing the Queen and Princesses. That is not the work of a moment. I am glad *all* the Princes are not on the spot.

I think of continuing here till the weather grows very bad; which it has not been at all yet, though not equal to what I am rejoiced you have found. I have no Somerset or Audley Street to receive me; Mrs. Damer is gone too. The Conways remain at Park Place till after Christmas; it is entirely out of fashion for women to grow old and stay at home in an evening. They invite you, indeed, now and then, but do not expect to see you till midnight; which is rather too late to begin the day, unless one was born but twenty years ago. I do not condemn any fashions, which the young ought to set, for the old certainly ought not; but an oak that has been going on in its old way for an hundred years, cannot shoot into a May-pole in three years, because it is the mode to plant Lombardy poplars.

What I should have suffered, if your letters, like mine, had wandered through Germany! I, you was sure, had written, and was in no danger. Dr. Price, who had whetted his ancient talons last year to no purpose, has had them all drawn by Burke, and the Revolution Club is as much exploded as the Cock-Lane Ghost; but you, in order to pass a quiet winter in Italy, *would* pass through a fiery furnace. Fortunately, you have not been singed, and the

[1] Afterwards Mrs. Mee.—Berry.

letter from Chamberri has composed all my panics, but has by no means convinced me that I was not perfectly in the right to endeavour to keep you at home. One does not put one's hand in the fire to burn off a hangnail; and, though health is delightful, neither of you were out of order enough to make a rash experiment. I would not be so absurd as to revert to old arguments, that happily proved no prophecies, if my great anxiety about you did not wish, in time, to persuade you to return through Switzerland and Flanders, if the latter is pacified and France is not; of which I see no likelihood.

Pray forgive me, if parts of my letters are sometimes tiresome; but can I appear only and always cheerful when you two are absent, and have another long journey to make, ay, and the sea to cross again? My fears cannot go to sleep like a paroli at faro till there is a new deal, in which even then I should not be sure of winning. If I see you again, I will think I have gained another milleleva, as I literally once did; with this exception, that I was vehemently against risking a doit at the game of travelling. Adieu!

2518. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Friday night, Nov. 27, 1790.

I AM waiting for a letter from Florence, not with perfect patience, though I could barely have one, even if you did arrive, as you intended, on the 12th; but twenty temptations might have occurred to detain you in that land of eye and ear sight: my chief eagerness is to learn that you have received at least some of my letters. I wish too to know, though I cannot yet, whether you would have me direct *par Paris*, or as I did before. In this state of uncertainty I did not prepare this to depart this morning; nor, though the Parliament met yesterday, have I a syllable of news for you, as there will be no debate till all the members have been sworn, which takes two or three days. Moreover, I am still here: the weather, though very rainy, is quite warm; and I have much more agreeable society at Richmond, with small companies and better hours, than in town, and shall have till after Christmas, unless great cold drives me thither. Lady Di, Selwyn, the Penns, the Onslows, Douglases, Mackinsys, Keenes, Lady Mount-Edgcumbe, all stay, and some of them meet every evening. The Boufflers too are constantly invited, and the Comtesse Emilie sometimes carries her harp, on which they

say she plays better than Orpheus; but as I never heard him on earth, nor *chez* Proserpine, I do not pretend to decide. Lord Fitzwilliam[1] has been here too; but was in the utmost danger of being lost on Saturday night, in a violent storm between Calais and Dover, as the captain confessed to him when they were landed. Do you think I did not ache at the recollection of a certain Tuesday when you were sailing to Dieppe?

2519. TO MISS AGNES BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, Sunday, Nov. 29, 1790.

Though I write to both at once, and reckon your letters to come equally from both, yet I delight in seeing your hand with a pen as well as with a pencil, and you express yourself as well with the one as with the other. Your part in that which I have been so happy as to receive this moment, has singularly obliged me, by your having saved me the terror of knowing you had a torrent to cross after heavy rain. No cat is so afraid of water for herself, as I am grown to be for you. That panic, which will last for many months, adds to my fervent desire of your returning early in the autumn, that you may have neither fresh water nor the "silky" ocean to cross in winter. Precious as our insular situation is, I am ready to wish with the Frenchman, that you could somehow or other get to it by land,—"Oui, c'est une isle toujours, je le sçais bien; mais, par exemple, en allant d'alentour, n'y auroit-il pas moyen d'y arriver par terre?"

Correggio never pleased me in proportion to his fame: his grace touches upon grimace; the mouth of the beautiful angel at Parma curls up almost into a half-moon. Still I prefer Correggio to the *lourd* want of grace in Guercino, who is to me a German edition of Guido. I am sorry the bookseller would not let you have an 'Otranto.' Edwards told me, above two months ago, that he every day expected the whole impression; and he has never mentioned it waiting for my corrections. I will make Kirgate write to him, for I have told you that I am still here. We have had much rain, but no flood; and yesterday and to-day have exhibited Florentine skies.

From town I know nothing; but that on Friday, after the King's speech, Earl Stanhope made a most frantic speech on the National

[1] Richard, seventh and last Viscount Fitzwilliam, the munificent benefactor to the University of Cambridge. He died in 1816.—Wright.

Assembly and against Calonne's book, which he wanted to have taken up for high treason.[1] He was every minute interrupted by loud bursts of laughter; which was all the answer he received or deserved. His suffragan Price has published a short sneaking equivocal answer to Burke, in which he pretends his triumph over the King of France alluded to July, not to October, though his sermon was preached in November. Credat—but not Judæus Apella, as Mr. Burke so wittily says of the assignats. Mr. Grenville, the Secretary of State, is made a peer, they say to assist the Chancellor [Thurlow] in the House of Lords: yet the papers pretend the Chancellor is out of humour, and will resign; the first may be true, the latter probably not.

Richmond, my metropolis, flourishes exceedingly. The Duke of Clarence arrived at his palace there last night, between eleven and twelve, as I came from Lady Douglas. His eldest brother and Mrs. Fitzherbert dine there to-day with the Duke of Queensbury, as his Grace, who called here this morning, told me, on the very spot where lived Charles the First, and where are the portraits of his principal courtiers from Cornbury. Queensbury has taken to that palace at last, and has frequently company and music there in an evening. I intend to go.

I suppose none of my Florentine acquaintance are still upon earth. The handsomest woman there, of my days, was a Madame Grifoni, *my* fair Geraldine:[2] she would now be a Methusalemess, and much more like a frightful picture I have of her by a one-eyed German painter. I lived then with Sir Horace Mann, in Casa Mannetti in Via de' Santi Apostoli, by the Ponte di Trinità. Pray, worship the works of Masaccio, if any remain; though I think the best have been burnt in a church. Raphael himself borrowed from him. Fra Bartolomeo, too, is one of my standards for great ideas; and Benvenuto Cellini's 'Perseus' a rival of the antique, though Mrs. Damer will not allow it. Over against the 'Perseus' is a beautiful small front of a house, with only three windows, designed by Raphael; and another, I

[1] In the report of Lord Stanhope's speech, as it is given in the 'Parliamentary History,' there is no expression of a wish that M. Calonne should be "taken up for high treason." What the noble Earl said was, that the assertion that a civil war would meet with the support of all the crowned heads in Europe, was a scandalous libel on the King of England, and might endanger the lives of many natives of Scotland and Ireland then residing in France.—Wright.

[2] "My illustrious sister," as he calls her, in a letter to Mann, of 15th Sept., 1746 (ii. 56). Her sister, Madame Antinore, who died in 1756, was admired by Mann. See vol. ii. p. 503.—Cunningham.

think, near the Porta San Gallo, and, I believe, called Casa Panciatici or Pandolfini.

2520. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 1, 1790.

Indeed, my too indulgent Lady, my letters are written so idly, and filled with such trifles as occur, as Arabian tales, &c., that they are very unfit to be seen by any but yourselves, for whose amusement I send them; and being generally only answers to yours, they must be Hebrew to anybody else. This is merely a reply to your last. Madame de Sillery's protest against the *Monseigneur* was no panic, but an emanation of that *poissarde* cant that her recreant protector has adopted. When the late Emperor died, she forbade her pupils to mourn for him. The Duc de Chartres obeyed. The Duc de Montpensier, the second son, about seventeen, would not, but bespoke a black coat. La Gouvernante said to him, "Quelle fantaisie est-ce cela?" "Fantaisie!" cried the Prince, "est-ce une fantaisie que de vouloir porter le deuil de l'Empereur?" "Well, then!" said the mock Minerva, "you shall have no other coat till that is worn out." Would not one think that the Duc de Chartres was *her* son, and the two others sprung from Henri Quatre by the *Duchess* of Orleans?

One word more about Mr. Burke's book: I know the tirade on the Queen of France is condemned, and yet I must avow I admire it much. It paints her exactly as she appeared to me the first time I saw her when Dauphiness. She was going after the late King to chapel, and shot through the room like an aerial being, all brightness and grace, and without seeming to touch earth—*vera incessu patuit dea!* Had I Mr. Burke's powers, I would have described her in his words. I like "the swords leaping out of their scabbards;" in short, I am not more charmed with his wit and eloquence, than with his enthusiasm. Every page shows how sincerely he is in earnest—a wondrous merit in a political pamphlet. All other party writers *act* zeal for the public, but it never seems to flow from the heart. That cordiality, like a phial of spirits, will preserve his book, when some of his doctrines would have evaporated in fume. Lord Stanhope's were the ravings of a lunatic, imagining he could set the world on fire with phosphorus. Lord Lansdowne, I hear, said there was some good sense in that rant. How fortunate that Price and

his adherents were intoxicated by their own hopes, and flattered themselves that Europe was in so combustible a temper, that by throwing their farthing squibs from a pulpit, they should set even this country in a blaze, and like the wretches hanged last week for burning houses, should plunder some silver candlesticks from the altars in our churches, to which *the rights of men* entitle them. That proclamation of the 'Rights of Men,' is *ipso facto* a dissolution of all society, into which men entered for the defence of the rights of every individual. The consequence of universal equality would be, that the industrious only would labour, the idle not. Who then would be to maintain the inactive? Must the produce of the labours of the laborious be shared with the indolent? Oh, but there should be some government—then the governed would not be equal with the governors; but it is idle to confute nonsense! All the blessed liberty the French seemed to have gained is, that every man or woman, if *poissardes* are women, may hang whom they please. Dr. Price adopting such freedom, opened the nation's eyes—*Honi soit qui mal y pense!*

P.S. Your Ladyship forgot to send me the solution of the riddle.

2521. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 9, 1790.

Your Ladyship has furnished me with so many subjects, that I doubt whether I shall be able to crowd my answers into a single sheet of my small paper. I may branch into a pamphlet, while I am only replying to what you have said to me; but I must preface all by imploring you not to exhibit my letters. Though I am and must be proud of Lady Ravensworth's approbation of my sentiments, for I should not be a mortal if I had not a grain of vanity, nor should be believed if I denied it, for whoever has been imprudent enough to be an author must have had some; yet I am seriously in earnest in begging you will not show my letters. Foolish as I have been in publishing anything, it is my sober desire now not to have my name brought into question: I wish to pass my remnant of days forgotten and in indolent quiet; yet by having formerly committed myself in public, the impertinent newspapers bandy about my name, though I give not the smallest handle for it: an instance you mention, Madam, is a proof. Mr. Burke ordered

Dodsley to send me his book, though I have not seen him three times in three years. Good breeding obliged me to thank him, and my real admiration called on me to avow it—yet, will you believe, Madam? what is now called a *fine letter*, I might safely swear, did not contain six lines; and all it said was, that unless I could write as well as he does, I could not fully express my admiration, yet did not doubt but he would have that of mankind. I do not recollect the very words, but am sure that was the whole substance, and am much mistaken if that was a *fine letter;* nor would it ever have entered into my head, no, nor into vanity's own head, to talk of such a simple compliment,—and yet I have been told that it has been mentioned in a newspaper! I cannot suspect that Mr. Burke could think it worth his while to talk of such a natural civility; but somebody might be with him when he received it, and must have reported it, till it descended to the newspapers. Let me intreat your Ladyship not to contribute to my being game for coffee-houses; my vanity does not reach *jusque-là*. Alas! if my preface has got over-leaf, how shall I keep the rest within any bounds?

I am not surprised at Mr. Fox or Mr. Fitzpatrick for disliking *the extent* of Mr. Burke's notions: I should be mortified if the former did not admire the composition, and should readily distrust my own judgment, if the latter and Mr. Hare did not keep me in countenance. The last, I have been told, says, that though he would submit to Mr. Fox in everything else, he cannot give up Mr. Burke's book. I, who have more reason to be humble, and who certainly shall not set up my understanding against one so superior as Mr. Fox's, cannot help being rejoiced at its publication. Being a speculative and not a practical politician, my opinion may be biased by outward circumstances. I acknowledge, too, that I am apt to have strong prejudices both when I like and dislike; and, though time has worn them down to at least a smoother surface, I believe that the wit and eloquence of the work in question contributed to enchant me. Yet I must persist, without any variation in my principles, in applauding the publication *at the present moment*, when Reformation is gone raving mad, and, like Ceres, with blazing torches, would set fire to and destroy all the harvests upon earth because her daughter's liberty had been ravished. Reformation, which is everywhere perpetually wanted, is, I am grieved to say, a most dangerous chief-justice, and more apt to *terminer* than to *oyer*, and to commit more spoil than the criminals it arrests. This is no

novelty of opinion in me. Thirty years ago I had a dispute with Dame Macaulay on the same ground. I told her it was a settled maxim of mine *that no great country was ever saved by good men*, because good men will not go the lengths that may be necessary. Was *the Revolution* brought about by good men? No, the best patriots hesitated; the worst, Lord Sunderland, did not boggle—he pushed King James down the precipice. I went further; I owned to her that I should always be a coward about spilling the blood of others, and at this moment mine recoils when I hear the advocates of the French *États* cry, "A Revolution cannot be effected without blood, and that in France has cost but little!" My heavens! who has a patent from above, and without law, to shed a drop? In that case, I fear the *forum conscientiæ* is a most wicked tribunal. I went much further, I remember, with Mrs. Macaulay: I said, "Madam, had I been Luther, and could have known (even if persuaded that I was right in my premises, nay, had I even thought I was inspired), that for *the chance* of saving millions of souls I should be the cause of a million of lives, at least, being sacrificed before my doctrines could be established, it must have been a most palpable angel, and in a most heavenly livery, before he should have set me to work." Thus I am but uniform, not changed.

Another of my tenets, not a very practicable one, is this: the excellence of our constitution consists in the balance of the three powers. Unfortunately it is the nature of a balance to fluctuate by a breath of air. I have lived long enough to see King, Lords, Commons, preponderate at different periods. The political rule that I would wish always to see followed, should be, that whenever any one of the three powers preponderates, the other two should join against and counteract it. The first power has undoubtedly of late years been the heaviest; but that fourth power, that within these two years has started out of the earth like the black cloud in the 'Arabian Nights,' and which dispersing, disclosed an infernal Afrite —that power does not tend to balance, but overturn all three. Mr. Burke, with Solomon's seal, has put the evil spirits to flight; and though his talisman, I confess, will remain and be serviceable to Pharaoh's priests hereafter, I am poor-spirited enough to comfort myself with the appearance of the lovely gaudy rainbow that promises me security from the deluge I apprehended; and I have another comfort, which is, the shock lately given through Europe to prerogative is a counter-security to liberty. Their Majesties will be content with what prerogative they can preserve from the convulsion,

and not think of extending it for some years, unless the ravage of anarchy in France drives three or four of them to unite to suppress it, as they may do now on the pacification of Brabant. I own I felt for the latter, they were provoked by the despotism of the late Emperor; and acted from better, though mistaken, notions than the French, for the Flemings meant the defence of their religion; the French, though most intolerant, as Mr. Burke has shown, have no religion at all. This capital discordance between the two rebellions may have very wholesome consequences.

If the confusions in France are quelled by force, as I conclude they will be, the present prosecution of the clergy there would be likely to produce a full restoration of the Papal system; but that will be counterbalanced by the late enthusiasm of the Flemings; but I am running into speculations, which always contract a propensity to prediction. I hope I have explained and cleared my own principles; with all my prejudices, I have given proofs of moderation before. My own old friends have blamed my tenderness to Lord Clarendon, my palliation of Charles I. for his countenancing Lord Glamorgan, and my doubting the disinterestedness of Mr. Hampden. Perhaps it is no mighty crime not to please either side, provided not a glimpse of self-interest is the consequence, of which I hope I am clear; except that being by my station an aristocrat, and by my father's goodness a placeman for life, I cannot wish to be swept into the common sewers. I avow all, I conceal nothing, but I maintain that I am not changed in any principle; yet if one must make an option between Mirabeau and Mr. Burke, I declare I am a Burkist.

There are a few other passages I wish to answer, but my poor hand is so weary by writing all this in a breath, that I must stop and cannot send it away to-day.

Friday, 10th.

I have seen good old Lord George and would have persuaded him to read the pamphlet, which I acknowledged I admired, as I have to Mrs. Bouverie; but did not prevail. What your Ladyship says of the authoresses of your sex does not proceed from want of strength of head, but from the rarity of grave discussions among them. When they do inform themselves, they know their acquisitions are uncommon, and it makes them vain. I have seen it the case of great lawyers retired from business, who, having taken to reading the classics, have quoted the commonplaces of Horace, which an Etonian of twenty would blush to cite, knowing all his contemporaries were as familiar with them as he. I thank your Ladyship for your

impartiality in telling me of Lady Ravensworth's partiality to my niece. I flatter myself she is not undeserving of either, and wish she was so happy as to be equally known to both!

2522. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 20, 1790; *very late at night.*

The French packet that was said to be lost on Tuesday last, and which did hang out signals of distress, was saved, but did not bring any letters; but three Flemish mails that were due are arrived, and did bring letters, and, to my inexpressible joy, two from you of the 22nd and 29th of last month, telling me that you have received as far as No. 4 and 5 of mine. Thank all the stars in Herschel's telescope, or beyond its reach, that our correspondence is out of the reach of France and all its ravages! Thank you a million of times for all your details about yourselves! When even the apprehension of any danger disquiets me so much, judge whether I do not interest myself in every particular of your pleasures and amusements! Florence was my delight, as it is yours; but, I don't know how, I wish you did not like it quite so much! and, after the gallery, how will my silver-penny of a gallery look? Indeed, for your Boboli, which I thought horrible even fifty years ago, before shepherds had seen the star of taste in the west, and glad tidings were proclaimed to their flocks, I do think there is not an acre on the banks of the Thames that should vail the bonnet to it.

Of Mr. Burke's book, if I have not yet told you my opinion, I do now; that it is one of the finest compositions in print. There is reason, logic, wit, truth, eloquence, and enthusiasm, in the brightest colours. That it has given a mortal stab to sedition, I believe and hope; because the fury of the Brabanters,—whom, however, as having been aggrieved, I pitied and distinguish totally from the savage Gauls,—and the unmitigated and execrable injustices of the latter, have made almost any state preferable to such anarchy and desolation, that increases every day. Admiring thus, as I do, I am very far from subscribing to the extent of almost all Mr. Burke's principles. The work, I have no doubt, will hereafter be applied to support very high doctrines; and to you I will say, that I think it an Apocrypha, that, in many a council of Bishops, will be added to the Old Testament. Still, such an Almanzor was wanting at this crisis; and his foes show how deeply they are wounded, by their

abusive pamphlets. Their Amazonian allies, headed by Kate Macaulay[1] and the virago Barbauld, whom Mr. Burke calls our *poissardes*, spit their rage at eighteen-pence a head, and will return to Fleet-ditch, more fortunate in being forgotten than their predecessors, immortalised in the 'Dunciad.' I must now bid you good-night; and night it is, to the tune of morning. Adieu, all three!

2523. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Thursday evening, Jan. 6, 1791.

I HAVE been ill for three weeks, Madam, with some gout and a good deal of rheumatism, and this is the first day in which I have been able to walk (with help) from my bedchamber to the Blue Room: but, as I hate to tire anybody with common habitual complaints, or to trouble them to inquire after me, I have kept my ails to myself as much as I could. I do certainly mend, though very slowly: no wonder, at my age, and with such a frame! Still I have great cause to be thankful, for though the husk is as slight as the shell of a paper nautilus, the core is of iron wood. My appetite (no voracious one) never fails; and for sleep it is at my command, as if I had a guardian angel (poor angel!) always at my elbow, for I have nothing to do, day or night, but to shut my eyes, and Ariel seals them; however, he has a good deal of time to himself, for I indulge myself and him in that sinecure for half the four-and-twenty hours.

Such having been my Christmas gambols, Madam, it is impossible I can have anything to entertain you. I mean, if I can with safety, to be conveyed to London next week; but I am a great coward about relapses, and never lay in a stock of patience but for the first edition of a fit, and therefore shall not be too precipitate.

Lady Douglas will live; but at present the disorder has fallen on her eyes, but I hope not desperately.

This has been an effort, and now I must rest.—Here, Ariel!

[1] A pamphlet, entitled 'Observations on the Reflections of the Right Hon. Edmund Burke on the Revolution in France; in a Letter to Earl Stanhope,' was attributed to Mrs. Macaulay.—WRIGHT.

2524. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 20, 1791.

I HAVE indeed, Madam, been much worse since I gave your Ladyship the last account of myself; and that much worse is indeed very far from being much better. I have the gout, or rheumatism, or both in every joint of both arms and hands, and for three days could neither open nor attend to the prologue you were so good as to send me, and which I believe I shall admire whenever my head is clear enough to know what I do like. I have no dangerous symptoms, but here I lie, balloted between pain, extreme weakness, and some cordage of a constitution that still ties the skeleton together.

2525. TO MISS BERRY.

Berkeley Square, Saturday, Jan. 22, 1791.

I HAVE been most unwillingly forced to send you such bad accounts of myself by my two last letters; but, as I could not conceal all, it was best to tell you the whole truth. Though I do not know that there was any real danger, I could not be so blind to my own age and weakness as not to think that, with so much gout and fever, the conclusion might very probably be fatal; and therefore it was better you should be prepared for what might happen. The danger appears to be entirely over: there seems to be no more gout to come. I have no fever, have a very good appetite, and sleep well. Mr. Watson,[1] who is all tenderness and attention, is persuaded to-day that I shall recover the use of my left hand; of which I despaired much more than of the right, as having been seized three weeks earlier. Emaciated and altered I am incredibly, as you would find were you ever to see me again. But this illness has dispelled all visions; and, as I have little prospect of passing another happy autumn, I must wean myself from whatever would embitter my remaining time by disappointments.

Your No. 15 came two days ago, and gives me the pleasure of knowing that you both are the better for riding, which I hope you will continue. I am glad, too, that you are pleased with your

[1] His surgeon.—BERRY.

Duchess of Fleury and your Latin professor; but I own, except your climate and the six hundred camels, you seem to me to have met with no treasure which you might not have found here without going twenty miles: and even the camels, according to Soame Jenyns' spelling, were to be had from Carrick and other places.

I doubt you apply Tully 'de Amicitia' too favourably: at least, I fear there is no paragraph that countenances 73 and 27.

Monday, the 24th.

I think I shall give you pleasure by telling you that I am very sure now of recovering from the present fit. It has almost always happened to me, in my considerable fits of the gout, to have one critical night that celebrates its departure: at the end of two different fits I each time slept eleven hours. Morpheus is not quite so young nor so generous now; but, with the interruption of a few minutes, he presented me with eight hours last night: and thence I shall date my recovery. I shall now begin to let in a little company; and, as the Parliament will meet in a week, my letters will probably not be so dull as they have been; nor shall I have occasion, nor be obliged, to talk so much of myself, of which I am sure others must be tired, when I am so much tired myself.

Tuesday, the 25th.

Old Mrs. French[1] is dead at last, and I am on the point of losing, or have lost, my oldest acquaintance and friend, George Selwyn, who was yesterday at the extremity. These misfortunes, though they can be so but for a short time, are very sensible to the old; but him I really loved, not only for his infinite wit, but for a thousand good qualities. Lady Cecilia Johnstone was here yesterday. I said much for you, and she as much to you. The Gunnings are still playing the fool, and perhaps somebody with them; but I cannot tell you the particulars now. Adieu!

[1] An Irish lady, who, during the latter part of her life, had a country house at Hampton Court. [See p. 102]—Berry.

2526 TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 28, 1791.

You and Lord Ossory have been so very good to me, Madam, that I must pay you the first tribute of my poor reviving fingers—I believe they never will be their own men again; but as they have lived so long in your Ladyship's service, they shall show their attachment to the last, like Widdrington on his stumps. I have had another and grievous memento, the death of poor Selwyn! His end was lovely, most composed and rational. From eight years old I had known him intimately without a cloud between us; few knew him so well, and consequently few knew so well the goodness of his heart and nature. But I will say no more—*Mon. Chancelier vous dira le reste.*[1]—No, my chancellor shall put an end to the session, only concluding, as Lord Bacon would have done for King James, with an apologue, "His Majesty's recovery has turned the corner, and exceeding the old fable, has proved that the stomach can do better without the limbs than they could without him."—Adieu, Madam.

2527. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Saturday, Jan. 29, 1791.

Voici de ma propre écriture! the best proof that I am recovering, though not rapidly, which is not the march of my time of life. For these last six days I have mended more than I expected. My left hand, the first seized, is the most dilatory, and of which I have least hopes. The rheumatism, that I thought so clear and predominant, is so entirely gone, that I now rather think it was hussar-gout attacking in flying squadrons the outposts. No matter which, very ill I was; and you might see what I thought of myself: nor can I stand many such victories. My countenance was so totally altered, that I could not trace it myself. Its outlines have returned to their posts, though with deep gaps. This is a true picture, and too long an one of self; and too hideous for a bracelet. *Apropos,* your sweet Miss Foldson, I believe, is painting portraits of *all* our Princesses, to be sent to all the Princes upon earth; for, though I have sent her several written duns, she has not deigned even to answer one in

[1] Here begins Kirgate's handwriting in MSS.—R. Vernon Smith.

writing. I don't know whether Mrs. Buller is not appointed Royal Academician too; for, though I desired the "Charming-man,"[1] who was to dine with her that day, to tell her, above a week ago, that I should be glad to see her, she has not taken the least notice of it. Mr. Batt, ditto; who was at Cambridge's when I was at the worst, and knew so, has not once inquired after me, in town or country. So you see you have carried off your friends from me as well as yourselves: and it is not *them* I regret; or rather, in fact, I outlive all my friends! Poor Selwyn is gone, to my sorrow; and no wonder Ucalegon feels it! He has left about thirty thousand pounds to Mademoiselle Fagniani;[2] twenty of which, if she has no children, to go to those of Lord Carlisle: the Duke of Queensberry residuary legatee. Old French has died as foolishly as she lived, and left six thousand pounds to you don't know whom; but to be raised out of her judicious collection of trumpery pictures, &c.

Pray, delight in the following story: Caroline Vernon, *fille d'honneur*, lost t'other night two hundred pounds at faro, and bade Martindale mark it up. He said he had rather have a draft on her banker. "Oh! willingly;" and she gave him one. Next morning he hurried to Drummond's, lest all her money should be drawn out. "Sir," said the clerk, "would you receive the contents immediately?" "Assuredly." "Why, Sir, have you read the note?" Martindale took it; it was, "Pay to the bearer two hundred blows, well applied." The nymph tells the story herself; and yet I think the clerk had the more humour of the two.

The Gunninghiad[3] draws to a conclusion. The General, a few weeks ago, to prove the equality of his daughter to any match, literally put into the newspapers, that he himself is the thirty-second descendant in a line from Charlemagne;—*oui vraiment!* Yet he had better have, like Prior's Madam,

> To cut things short, gone up to Adam.

However, this Carlovingian hero does not allow that the letters are forgeries, and rather suspects the novelist, his lady,[4] for the authoress; and if she is, probably Miss Charlemagne is not quite innocent of

[1] Edward Jerningham, 'the poet.' See Vol. ix. p. 24 and p. 216.—Cunningham.

[2] Married, in 1798, to the Earl of Yarmouth; who, in 1822, succeeded his father as third Marquis of Hertford.—Wright.

[3] Meaning the strange, imagined history of a marriage supposed to have been likely to take place between Miss Gunning and the Marquis of Blandford.—Berry.

[4] Mrs. Gunning was a Miss Minifie, of Fairwater, Somersetshire, and before her marriage had published several popular novels.—Wright.

the plot: though she still maintains that her mother-in-law elect did give her much encouragement; which, considering her Grace's conduct about her children, is not the most incredible part of this strange story. I have written this at twice, and will now rest.

Sunday evening.

I wish that complaining of people for abandoning me were an infallible recipe for bringing them *back!* but I doubt it will not do in acute cases. To-day, a few hours after writing the latter part of this, appeared Mr. Batt. He asked many pardons, and I easily forgave him; for the *mortification* was not begun. He asked much after you both. I had a crowd of visits besides; but they all come past two o'clock, and sweep one another away before any can take root. My evenings are solitary enough, for I ask nobody to come; nor, indeed, does anybody's evening begin till I am going to bed. I have outlived daylight, as well as my contemporaries. What have I not survived? The Jesuits and the monarchy of France! and both without a struggle! Semiramis seems to intend to add Constantinople to the mass of revolutions; but is not her permanence almost as wonderful as the contrary explosions! I wish—I wish we may not be actually flippancying ourselves into an embroil with that Ursa-major of the North Pole. What a vixen little island are we, if we fight with the Aurora Borealis and Tippoo Saib at the end of Asia at the same time! You, damsels, will be like the end of the conundrum,

You've seen the man who saw these wondrous sights.

Monday evening.

I cannot finish this with my own hand, for the gout has returned a little into my right arm and wrist, and I am not quite so well as I was yesterday; but I had said my say, and have little to add. The Duchess of Gordon,[1] t'other night, coming out of an assembly, said to Dundas, "Mr. Dundas, you are used to speak in public; will you call my servant?"

Here I receive your long letter of the 7th, 9th, and 10th, which it is impossible for me to answer now: there is one part to which I wish to reply, but must defer till next post, by which time I hope

[1] Jane Maxwell, Duchess of Gordon, called by Walpole (post, p. 318) "one of the Empresses of fashion." "This Duchess had more wit than any of Walpole's old sayers of good things—Lady Townshend, &c.; but she was also coarser than even they ventured to be." *Croker* (*MS.*)—CUNNINGHAM.

to have recovered my own pen. You ask about the house of Argyll. You know I have no connexion with them, nor any curiosity about them. Their relations and mine have been in town but four days, so I know little from them: Mrs. Grenville, to-day, told me the Duke proposes to continue the same life he used to lead, with a cribbage-table and his family. Everybody admires the youngest daughter's[1] person and understanding. Adieu! I will begin to write again myself as soon as I can.

2528. TO MISS BERRY.

Berkeley Square, Friday, Feb. 4, 1791.

Last post I sent you as cheerful a letter as I could, to convince you that I was recovering. This will be less gay; not because I have had a little return in both arms, but because I have much more pain in my mind than in my limbs. I see and thank you for all the kindness of your intention; but, as it has the contrary effect from what you expect, I am forced, for my own peace, to beseech you not to continue a manœuvre that only tantalises and wounds me. In your last you put together many friendly words to give me hopes of your return; but can I be so blind as not to see that they are vague words? Did you mean to return in autumn, would you not say so? would the most artful arrangement of words be so kind as those few simple ones? In fact, I have for some time seen how little you mean it; and, for your sakes, I cease to desire it. The pleasure you expressed at seeing Florence again, forgive me for saying, is the joy of sight merely; for can a little Italian town, and wretched Italian company, and travelling English lads and governors, be comparable to the choice of the best company of so vast a capital as London, unless you have taken an aversion to England? And your renewed transports at a less and still more insipid town, Pisa! These plainly told me your thoughts, which vague words cannot efface. You then dropped that you could let your London house till next Christmas, and then talked of a visit to

[1] Lady Charlotte-Susan-Maria; married, first to Colonel John Campbell, of Islay, and secondly to the Rev. Mr. Bury.—Wright. "Thought by the best-judging of her contemporaries the most beautiful creature ever seen. I saw her in 1801, still magnificent, whole theatres turning round to look at her; but twenty years later she had grown coarse, and one of the most mortifying spectacles of dilapidated, but still pretentious beauty I could imagine." *Croker (MS.)*—Cunningham.

Switzerland, and since all this, Mrs. Damer has warned me not to expect you till *next spring*. I shall not; nor do I expect *that* next spring. I have little expected this next! My dearest Madam, I allow all my folly and unreasonableness, and give them up and abandon them totally. I have most impertinently and absurdly tried, for my own sake merely, to exact from two young ladies, above forty years younger than myself, a promise of sacrificing their rooted inclinations to my whims and satisfaction. But my eyes are opened, my reason is returned, I condemn myself; and I now make you but one request, which is, that, though I am convinced it would be with the most friendly and good-natured meaning possible, I do implore you not to try to help me to delude myself any more. You never knew half the shock it gave me when I learned from Mr. Batt, what you had concealed from me, your fixed resolution of going abroad last October; and though I did in vain deprecate it,—your coming to Twickenham in September, which I know, and from my inmost soul believe, was from mere compassion and kindness to me,—yet it did aggravate my parting with you.

I would not repeat all this, but to prevail with you, while I do live, and while you do condescend to have any friendship for me, never to let me deceive myself. I have no right to inquire into your plans, views, or designs; and never will question you more about them. I shall deserve to be deluded if I do; but what you do please to say to me, I beg may be frank. I am, in every light, too weak to stand disappointment now: I cannot be disappointed. You have a firmness that nothing shakes; and, therefore, it would be unjust to betray your good-nature into any degree of insincerity. You do nothing that is not reasonable and right; and I am conscious that you bore a thousand times more from my self-love and vanity, than any other two persons but yourselves would have supported with patience so long. Be assured that what I say I think, feel, and mean: derange none of your plans for me. I now wish you to take no one step but what is conformable to your views, interest, and satisfaction. It would hurt me to interfere with them: I reproach myself with having so ungenerously tried to lay you under any difficulties, and I approve your resolution in adhering steadily to your point. Two posts ago I hinted that I was weaning myself from the anxiety of an attachment to two persons that must have been so uneasy to them, and has ended so sorrowfully to myself; but that anxiety I restrict solely to the desire of your return. My friendship, had I years to live, could not alter or be shaken; and

there is no kind of proof or instance of it that I will not give you both, while I have breath.

I have vented what I had at my heart, and feel relieved. Do not take ill a word I have said. Be assured I can love you as much as ever I did, and do; though I am no longer so unjust as to prefer my own satisfaction to yours. Here I drop the subject: before Tuesday, perhaps, I shall be able to talk on some other.

Monday, 7th.

Though the Parliament is met, and the town, they say, full, I have not heard a tittle of news of any sort: and yet my prison is a coffee-house in a morning, though I have been far from well this whole week. Yesterday and Saturday the gout was so painful in my right shoulder, that I could not stoop or turn round. To-day it is in my left shoulder, and, I doubt, coming into my right foot: in short, it seems to be going its circle over again. I am not very sorry; sufferings reconcile one to parting with one's self.

One of our numerous tempests threw down Mrs. Damer's chimney last week, and it fell through her workshop; but fortunately touched none of her own works, and only broke two or three insignificant casts. I suppose you know she returns through Spain. This minute I have heard that Lord Lothian's daughter, Lady Mary St. John, and daughter-in-law of Lady Di. Beauclerk, died yesterday, having been delivered of a fine boy but the day before. As you are curious to know the chief topic of conversation, it is the rival Opera-houses, neither of which are opened yet; both saying the other is falling down. Taylor has published a pamphlet that does not prove that the Marquis[1] is the most upright Chamberlain that ever dropped from the skies, nor that the skies are quite true blue. Adieu! if no postscript to-morrow.—None.

2529. TO MISS BERRY.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 12, 1791.

I HAVE received your two letters of January 17th and 24th with an account of your objects and plans; and the latter are very much what I expected, as before you receive this you will have seen by my last, No. 18. Indeed, you most kindly offer to break so far into your plan as to return at the beginning of next winter; but as that

[1] Of Salisbury.—BERRY.

would, as you say, not only be a sacrifice, but risk your healths, can anything upon earth be more impossible than for me to accept or consent to such a sacrifice? Were I even in love with one of you, could I agree to it? and, being only a most zealous friend, do you think I will hear of it? Should I be a friend at all, if I wished you, for my sake, to travel in winter over mountains, or risk the storms at sea, that I have not forgotten when you went away? Can I desire you to derange a reasonable plan of economy, that would put you quite at your ease at your return? Have I any pretensions for expecting, still less for asking, such or any sacrifices? Have I interested myself in your affairs only to embarrass them?

I do, in the most positive and solemn manner, refuse to accept the smallest sacrifice of any part of your plan, but the single point that would be so *hard* on me. I will say not a word more on your return, and beg your pardon for having been so selfish as to desire it: my only request now is, that we may say no more about it. I am grieved that the great distance we are at must make me still receive letters about it for some weeks. I shall not forget how very unreasonable I have been myself; nor shall I try to forget it, lest I should be silly again: but I earnestly desire to be totally silent on a subject that I have totally abandoned, and which it is not at all improbable I may never have occasion to renew.

I knew the Comte de Coigny[1] in the year 1766: he was then lively and jovial. I did not think he would turn out a writer, or even reader; but he was agreeable. I say nothing on France: you must know as much as I do, and probably sooner. I will only tell you, that my opinion is not altered in a tittle. What will happen I do not pretend to guess; but am thoroughly persuaded that the present system, if it can be called so, cannot take root. The flirts towards anarchy here have no effect at all. Horne Tooke before Christmas presented a saucy libel to the House of Commons as a petition on his election. The House contemptuously voted it only frivolous and vexatious, and disappointed him of a ray of martyrdom; but his fees, &c., will cost him three or four hundred pounds, which never go into a mob's calculation of the ingredients of martyrdom.[2]

[1] Great-uncle of the present Duc de Coigny.—BERRY.

[2] On the 5th of February, the committee appointed to try the merits of the petition, reported it to be frivolous and vexatious. Mr. Burke urged the necessity of taking some step against the author of it; but the subject was got rid of by a motion for the order of the day.—WRIGHT.

Monday morning, 14th.

I have a story to tell you, much too long to add to this; which I will send next post, unless I have leisure enough to-day, from people that call on me, to finish it to-day, having begun it last night; and in that case I will direct it to Miss Agnes. Mr. Lysons the clergyman has just been here, and told me of a Welsh sportsman, a Jacobite I suppose, who has very recently had his daughter christened Louisa Victoria Maria Sobieski Foxhunter Moll Boycot.[1] The curate of the minister who baptised her confirmed the truth of it to Mr. Lysons. When Belgiojoso, the Austrian Minister, was here, and thought he could write English, he sent a letter to Miss Kennedy, a woman of the town, that began, "My Kennedy Polly dear girl." *Apropos*—and not much—pray tell me whether the Cardinal of York calls himself King; and whether James the Eighth, Charles the Fourth, or what?

2530. TO MISS AGNES BERRY.

Feb. 13, 1791.

The following narrative, though only the termination of a legend of which you know the foregoing chapters, is too singular and too long to be added to my letter; and therefore, though you will receive two by the same post, you will not repine. In short, the 'Gunninghiad' is completed—not by a marriage, like other novels of the Minifies.[2] Voici how the dénouement happened.

Another supposed love-letter had come from the Marquis[3] within these few weeks; which was so improbable, that it raised more suspicions, and was more closely examined; and thence was discovered to have been both altered and interlined. On this the General sent *all* the letters down to the Marquis;[4] desiring to be certified of their authenticity, or the contrary. I should tell you that all this has happened since the death of his sister; who kept up the high tone, and said, *her* brother was not a man to be trifled with. The Marquis immediately distinguished the two kinds; owned the few letters that disclaimed all inclination for Miss Charlemagne,

[1] The lady with this strange assemblage of Christian names married in 1810 Francis, fifth Earl of Guilford, who died in 1817.—Cunningham.

[2] The name of the family of Mrs. Gunning.—Wright.

[3] George-Spencer Churchill, Marquis of Blandford; he succeeded his father as fourth Duke of Marlborough in 1817, and died in 1840.—Cunningham.

[4] General Gunning was son of John Gunning, Esq., of Castle-Coole, in the county of Roscommon, and brother of the beautiful Miss Gunning, married first, in 1752, to the Duke of Hamilton; and secondly, in 1759, to the Duke of Argyle.—Wright.

disavowed the rest. Thence fell the General's wrath on his consort; of which I have told you.

However, the General and his ducal brother-in-law thought it expedient that Miss Charly's character should be cleared as far as possible; she still maintaining the prodigious encouragement she had received from the parents of her intended sposo. She was ordered to draw up a narrative, which should be laid before the Duke of Marlborough; and, if allowed by him, to be shown for her vindication. She obeyed; and her former assertions did not suffer by the new statement. But one singular circumstance was added: she confessed, ingenuous maid! that though she had not been able to resist so dazzling an offer, her heart was still her cousin's, the other Marquis.[1]

Well! this narrative, after being laid before a confidential junto at Argyll-house, was sent to Blenheim by the General, by his own groom. Judge of the astonishment of the junto, when Carloman, almost as soon as was possible, laid before them a short letter from the Prince of Mindleheim,[2] declaring how delighted he and his Princess had been at their son's having made choice of so *beautiful* and *amiable* a virgin for his bride; how greatly they had encouraged the match; and how chagrined they were, that, from the lightness and inconstancy of his temper, the proposed alliance was quite at an end. This wonderful acquittal of the damsel the groom deposed he had received in *half-an-hour* after his arrival at Blenheim; and he gave the most natural and unembarrassed account of all the stages he had made, going and coming.

You may still suspect, and so did some of the council, that every tittle of this report and of the letter were not gospel: though I own, I thought the epistle not irreconcilable to other parts of the conduct of their Graces about their children. Still, I defy you to guess a thousandth part of the marvellous explanation of the mystery.

The first circumstance that struck was, that the Duke, in his own son's name, had forgotten the *d* in the middle. That was possible in the hurry of doing justice. Next, the wax was black; and nobody could discover for whom such illustrious personages were in mourning. Well; that was no proof one way or other. Unluckily, somebody suggested that Lord Henry Spencer was in town, though

[1] George-William Campbell, Marquis of Lorn. He succeeded his father as sixth Duke of Argyle in 1806, and died in 1839.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] The Emperor Joseph, in 1705, bestowed on the great Duke of Marlborough the principality of Mindleheim, in Suabia.—WRIGHT.

to return the next day to Holland. A messenger was sent to him, though very late at night, to beg he would repair to Argyll-house. He did: the letter was shown to him; he laughed, and said it had not the least resemblance to the father's hand. This was negative detection enough; but now comes the most positive and wonderful unravelling!

The next day the General received a letter from a gentleman, confessing that his wife, a friend of Miss Charly, had lately received from her a copy of a most satisfactory testimonial from the Duke of Marlborough in her favour (though, note, the narrative was not then gone to Blenheim); and begging the gentlewoman's husband would transcribe it, and send it to her, as she wished to send a copy to a friend in the country. The husband had done so, but had had the precaution to write at top *Copy;* and before the signature had written, *signed,* M.—both which words Miss had erased, and then delivered the gentleman's identic transcript to the groom, to be brought back as from Blenheim: which the *steady* groom, on being examined anew, confessed; and that, being bribed, he had gone but one post and invented the rest.

You will now pity the poor General, who has been a dupe from the beginning, and sheds floods of tears; nay, has actually turned his daughter out of doors, as she is banished from Argyll-house too: and Lady Charlotte,[1] to her honour, speaks of her with the utmost indignation. In fact, there never was a more extraordinary tissue of effrontery, folly, and imposture.

It is a strange but not a miraculous part of this strange story, that Gunnilda is actually harboured by, and lodges with, the old Duchess[2] in Pall-Mall, the grandmother of whom she has miscarried, and who was the first that was big with her. You may depend on the authenticity of this narrative, and may guess from whom I received all the circumstances, day by day; but pray, do not quote me for that reason, nor let it out of your hands, nor transcribe any part of it. The town knows the story confusedly, and a million of false readings there will be; but, though you know it exactly, do not send it back hither. You will, perhaps, be diverted by the various ways in which it will be related. Yours, &c.

EGINHART, Secretary to Charlemagne
and the Princess Gunnilda, his daughter.

[1] Lady Charlotte Campbell:—see p. 280.—WRIGHT.

[2] Gertrude, eldest daughter of John Earl Gower, widow of John, fourth Duke of Bedford.—WRIGHT.

P.S. Bowen is the name of the gentleman who gave information of the letter sent to him to be copied, on hearing of the suspected forgeries. The whole *Minifry* are involved in the suspicions, as they defend the damsel, who still confesses nothing; and it is her mother, not she, who is supposed to have tampered with the groom; and is discarded, too, by her husband.

2531. TO THE EARL OF CHARLEMONT.[1]

Berkeley Square, Feb. 17, 1791.

It is difficult, my Lord, with common language that has been so prostituted in compliments, to express the real sense of gratitude which I do feel at my heart, for the obligation I have to your Lordship for an act of friendship as unexpected as it was unsolicited; which last circumstance doubles the favour, as it evinces your Lordship's generosity and nobleness of temper, without surprising me. How can I thank your Lordship, as I ought, for interesting yourself, and of yourself, to save me a little mortification, which I deserve, and should deserve more, had I the vanity to imagine that my printing a few copies of my disgusting Tragedy would occasion different and surreptitious editions of it?

Mr. Walker[2] has acquainted me, my Lord, that your Lordship has most kindly interposed to prevent a bookseller of Dublin from printing an edition of 'The Mysterious Mother' without my consent; and with the conscious dignity of a great mind, your Lordship has not even hinted to me the graciousness of that favour. How have I merited such condescending goodness, my Lord? Had I a prospect of longer life, I never could pay the debt of gratitude; the weightier, as your Lordship did not intend I should know that I owe it. My gratitude can never be effaced; and I am charmed that it is due, and due with so much honour to me, that nothing could bribe me to have less obligation to your Lordship, of which I am so proud. But as to the play itself, I doubt it must take its fate. Mr. Walker tells me the booksellers have desired him to remonstrate to me, urging that they have already expended fifty pounds; and Mr. Walker adds, as no doubt would be the case, that

[1] This letter was written in consequence of one Walpole had received, informing him that a Dublin bookseller was about to print his tragedy of 'The Mysterious Mother.' At this time, and indeed until the Union took place, there was no act of parliament which regulated literary property in Ireland.—Wright.

[2] See Walker's Letter in 'Pinkerton's Correspondence.'—Cunningham.

should this edition be stifled, when now expected, some other printer would publish it. I certainly might indemnify the present operator, but I know too much of the craft, not to be sure, that I should be persecuted by similar exactions; and alas! I have exposed myself but too much to the tyranny of the press, not to know that it taxes delinquents as well as multiplies their faults.

In truth, my Lord, it is too late now to hinder copies of my play from being spread. It has appeared here, both whole and in fragments; and, to prevent a spurious one, I was forced to have some printed myself: therefore, if I consent to an Irish edition, it is from no vain desire of diffusing the performance. Indeed, my good Lord, I have lived too long, not to have divested myself both of vanity and affected modesty. I have not existed to past seventy-three without having discovered the futility and triflingness of my own talents: and, at the same time, it would be impertinent to pretend to think that there is no merit in the execution of a tragedy, on which I have been so much flattered; though I am sincere in condemning the egregious absurdity of selecting a subject so improper for the stage, and even offensive to private readers.

But I have said too much on a personal theme; and therefore, after repeating a million of thanks to your Lordship for the honour of your interposition, I will beg your Lordship, if you please, to signify to the bookseller that you withdraw your prohibition: but I shall not answer Mr. Walker's letter till I have your Lordship's approbation, for you are both my Lord Chamberlain and licenser; and though I have a tolerably independent spirit, I may safely trust myself under the absolute power of one, who has voluntarily protected me against the licentiousness of those who have invaded my property, and who distinguishes so accurately and justly between license and liberty.

2532. TO MISS AGNES BERRY.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 18, 1791.

HERE is a shocking, not a fatal, codicil to Gunnilda's story. But first I should tell you, that two days after the explosion, the Signora Madre took a postchaise-and-four, and drove to Blenheim; but, not finding the Duke and Duchess there, she inquired where the Marquis was, and pursued him to Sir Henry Dashwood's: finding him there, she began about her poor daughter; but he interrupting her, said

there was an end put to all that, and desired to lead her to her chaise, which he insisted on doing, and did. I think this another symptom of the Minifry being accomplices to the daughter's enterprises. Well! after the groom's confession, and after Mr. Bowen had been confronted with her, and produced to her face her note to his wife, which she resolutely disowned, she desired the Duke of Argyll to let her take an oath on the Bible of her perfect innocence of every circumstance of the whole transaction; which you may be sure he did not permit. *N'importe:* the next day, taking two of the Duchess of Bedford's servants for witnesses, she went before a justice of peace, swore to her innocence and ignorance throughout, even of the note to Mrs. Bowen; and then said to the magistrate, "Sir, from my youth you may imagine I do not know the solemnity of an oath; but, to convince you I do, I know my salvation depends on what I have now sworn." Solve all this, if you can! Is it madness? Does even romance extend its inventions so far, or its dispensations? It is but a burlesque part of this wonderful tale, that old crazy Bedford exhibits Miss every morning on the causeway in Hyde Park; and declares her protegée some time ago refused the hand of your acquaintance, Mr. Trevelyan.[1] Except of the contending Opera-houses, one can hear of nothing but Miss Gunning; but it is now grown so disgusting a story, that I shall be glad to hear and repeat to you no more about it.

The Pantheon has opened, and is small, they say, but pretty and simple; all the rest ill-conducted, and from the singers to the scene-shifters imperfect; the dances long and bad, and the whole performance so dilatory and tedious, that it lasted from eight to half-an-hour past twelve. The rival theatre is said to be magnificent and lofty, but it is doubtful whether it will be suffered to come to light: in short, the contest will grow politics; *Dieu et Mon Droit* [the King] supporting the Pantheon, and *Ich Dien* [the Prince of Wales] countenancing the Haymarket. It is unlucky that the amplest receptacle is to hold the minority!

20th.

O'Hara[2] is come to town. You will love him better than ever. He persuaded the captain of the ship, whom you will love for being persuaded, to stop at Lisbon, that he might see Mrs. Damer.

[1] Mr. Trevelyan married, in the following August, Maria, daughter of Sir Thomas Spencer Wilson, Bart. On the death of his father, in 1828, he succeeded to the title, as fifth baronet.—WRIGHT.

[2] Afterwards lieutenant-governor of Gibraltar. He died in 1802.—WRIGHT.

O'Hara has been shockingly treated! The House of Richmond is on the point of receiving a very great blow. Colonel Lenox, who had been dangerously ill but was better, has relapsed, with all the worst symptoms;[1] and is too weak to be sent to the south, as the physicians recommended. Lady Charlotte is breeding, but that is very precarious; and should it even be a son, how many years ere that can be a comfortable resource!

Is not it strange that London, in February and Parliament sitting, should furnish no more paragraphs? Yet, confined at home and in everybody's way, and consequently my room being a coffee-house from two to four, I probably hear all events worth relating as soon as they are born, and send you them before they are a week old. Indeed, I think the Gunninghiana may last you a month at Pisa, where, I suppose, the grass grows in the streets as fast as news. When I go out again, I am likely to know less: I go but to few, and those the privatest places I can find, which are not the common growth of London; nor, but to amuse you, should I inquire after news. What is a juvenile world to me; or its pleasures, interests, or squabbles? I scarce know the performers by sight.

21*st.*

It is very hard! The Gunnings will not let me or the town have done with them. La Madre has advertised a Letter to the Duke of Argyll:[2] so he is forced to collect counter-affidavits. The groom has deposed that she promised him twenty pounds a year for his life, and he has given up a letter that she wrote to him. The mother, when she went after the Marquis [of Lorn], would have persuaded him to get into her chaise; but he would not venture being carried to Gretna-green, and married by force. She then wanted him to sign a paper, that all was over between him and her daughter. He said, "Madam, nothing was ever begun;" and refused.

I told you wrong: mother and daughter were not actually in the Duchess of Bedford's house, but in Lord John Russell's, which she lent to them; nor were her servants witnesses to the oath before Justice Hide, but Dr. Halifax and the apothecary. The Signora and her Infanta now, *for privacy*, are retired into St. James's-street, next

[1] Colonel Lenox recovered from his illness, and, in 1806, succeeded his uncle as fourth Duke of Richmond. His grace was governor of Canada at the period of his decease, at Montreal, in 1819; and was succeeded by the son here anticipated, who was born on the 3rd of August, 1791.—Wright.

[2] 'A Letter from Mrs. [Susannah] Gunning, addressed to his Grace the Duke of Argyll. London: printed for the Author, &c., 1791." 8vo., pp. 147.—Cunningham.



door to Brooks's; whence it is supposed Miss will angle for unmarried Marquises—perhaps for Lord Titchfield.[1] It is lost time for people to write novels, who can compose such a romance as these good folks have invented. Adieu!

2583. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 26, 1791.

I HAVE no letter from you to answer, nor anything new that is the least interesting to tell you. The Duke of Argyll has sent a gentleman with a cart-load of affidavits, which the latter read to mother and daughter, in order to prevent the publication of their libel; but it only enraged the former, who vows she will print all she knows, that is, anything she has heard by their entire intimacy in the family, or, no doubt, what she can invent or misrepresent. What a Medusa!

There has been a fragment of a rehearsal in the Haymarket, but still the Pantheon remains master of the field of battle; the vanquished are preparing manifestos, but they seldom recover the day.

Madame du Barry[2] is come over to recover her jewels, of which she has been robbed—not by the National Assembly, but by four Jews who have been seized here and committed to Newgate. Though the late Lord Barrymore acknowledged her husband to be of his noble blood, will she own the present Earl for a relation, when she finds him turned strolling player! If she regains her diamonds, perhaps Mrs. Hastings may carry her to court.[3]

If you want bigger events, you may send to the Russian army who will cut you fifteen thousand throats in a paragraph; or, *en attendant*, you may piddle with the havoc made at Chantilly, which has been half demolished by the rights of men, as the poor old Mesdames have been stopped by the rights of the *poissardes;* for, as it is true that extremes meet, the moment despotism was hurled from the throne, it devolved to the mob, whose majesties, not being able to write their names, do not issue *lettres de cachet*, but execute their

[1] Afterwards (1809) the fourth Duke of Portland (died 1854).—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] The last mistress of Louis the Fifteenth. The Count du Barry, who had disgraced his name by marrying her, claimed to be of the same family with the Earls of Barrymore in Ireland.—WRIGHT.

[3] Mrs. Hastings was supposed, by the party violence of the day, to have received immense bribes in diamonds.—WRIGHT. Queen Charlotte was very fond of Mrs. Hastings.—CUNNINGHAM.

wills with their own hands; for hanging, which degrades an executioner, *ne deroge pas* in sovereigns—witness the Czar Peter the Great, Muley Ishmael, and many religious and gracious African monarchs.

After eleven weeks of close confinement, I went out yesterday to take the air; but was soon driven back by rain and sleet, which soon ripened to a tempest of wind and snow, and continued all night: it does not freeze, but blows so hard, that I shall sally out no more till the weather has recovered its temper—I do not mean that I expect Pisan skies.

28*th*.

It was on Saturday that I began this; it is now Monday, and I have no letter from you, though we have had dozens of east winds. I am sorry to find that it costs above six weeks to say a word at Pisa and have an answer in London. This makes correspondence very uncomfortable; you will be talking to me of Miss Gunning, when, perhaps, she may be sent to Botany Bay, and be as much forgotten here as *the Monster*.[1] Still she has been a great resource this winter; for, though London is apt to produce Wilkeses, and George Gordons, and Mrs. Rudds, and Horne Tookes, and other phenomena, wet and dry, the present season has been very unprolific; and we are forced to import French news, as we used to do fashions and Operas comiques. The Mesdames are actually set out: I shall be glad to hear they are safe at Turin, for are there no poissardes but at Paris?[2] Natio poissarda est.

Mr. Gibbon writes that he has seen Necker, and found him still devoured by ambition,[3] and I should think by mortification at the foolish figure he has made. Gibbon admires Burke to the skies, and even the religious parts, he says.[4]

[1] A vagabond so called, from his going about attempting to stab at women with a knife. His first aim had probably been at their pockets, which having in several instances missed and wounded his intended victims, fear and a love of the marvellous dubbed him with the name of the Monster. The wretch, whose name was Renwick Williams, was tried for the offence at the Old Bailey, in July 1790, and found guilty of a misdemeanour.—Wright.

[2] After numerous interruptions, the King's aunts were permitted by the National Assembly to proceed to Italy.—Wright.

[3] "I have passed," says Gibbon, in a letter to Lord Sheffield, "four days at the Castle of Copet with Necker; and could have wished to have shown him as a warning to any aspiring youth possessed with the demon of ambition."—Wright.

[4] The following are Gibbon's expressions:—"Burke's book is a most admirable medicine against the French disease; which has made too much progress even in this happy country. I admire his eloquence, I approve his politics, I adore his chivalry, and I can forgive even his superstition."—Wright.

Monday evening.

The east winds are making me amends; one of them has brought me twins. I am sorry to find that even Pisa's sky is not quite sovereign, but that you have both been out of order, though, thank God! quite recovered both. If a Florentine March is at all like an English one, I hope you will not remove thither till April. Some of its months, I am sure, were sharper than those of our common wear are. Pray be quite easy about me: I am entirely recovered, though, if change were bad, we have scarce had one day without every variety of bad weather, with a momentary leaf-gold of sun. I have been out three times, and to-day have made five-and-twenty visits, and was let in at six; and, though a little fatigued, am still able, you see, to finish my letter. You seem to think I palliated my illness: I certainly did not tell you that I thought it doubtful how it would end; yet I told you all the circumstances, and surely did not speak sanguinely.

I wish, in No. 20, you had not again named October or November. I have quite given up those months, and am vexed I ever pressed for them, as they would break into your reasonable plans, for which I abandon any foolish ones of my own. But I am a poor philosopher, or rather am like all philosophers, have no presence of mind, and must study my part before I can act it. I have now settled myself not to expect you this year—do not unsettle me: I dread a disappointment, as I do a relapse of the gout; and therefore cut this article short, that I may not indulge vain hopes. My affection for you both is unalterable: can I give so strong a proof as by supplicating you, as I do earnestly, to act as is most prudent for your healths and interest? A long journey in November would be the worst part you could take, and I beseech you not to think of it: for me, you see I take a great deal of killing, nor is it so easy to die as is imagined.

Thank you, my dearest Miss Agnes, for your postscript. I love to see your handwriting; and yet do not press for it, as you are shy: though I address myself equally to both, and consult the healths of both in what I have recommended above. Here is a postscript for yours: Madame du Barry was to go and swear to her jewels before the Lord Mayor. Boydell, who is a little better bred than Monsieur Bailly,[1] made excuses for being obliged to administer

[1] M. Bailly, the learned astronomer. He was president of the first National Assembly, and in July, 1789, appointed mayor of Paris; in which situation he gave

the oath *chez lui*, but begged she would name her hour; and, when she did, he fetched her himself in the state-coach, and had a Mayor-Royal banquet ready for her. She has got most of her jewels again. I want the King to send her four Jews to the National Assembly, and tell them it is the change or *la monnoie* of Lord George Gordon, the Israelite.

Colonel Lenox is much better: the Duchess of Leinster had a letter from Goodwood to-day which says he rides out. I am glad you do. I said nothing on "the Charming-man's" [Jerningham's] Poem.[1] I fear I said too much to him myself. He said, others liked it; and showed me a note from Mr. Burke, that was hyperbole itself. I wish him so well, that I am sorry he should be so flattered, when, in truth, he has no genius. There is no novelty, no plan, and no suite in his poetry; though many of the lines are pretty. Dr. Darwin alone can exceed his predecessors.

Let me repeat to both, that distance of place and time can make no alteration in my friendship. It grew from esteem for your characters, and understandings, and tempers; and became affection for your good-natured attentions to me, where there is so vast a disproportion in our ages. Indeed, that complaisance spoiled me; but I have weaned myself of my own self-love, and you shall hear no more of its dictates.

2534. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Berkeley Square, March 5, 1791.

One may live in a vast capital, and know no more of three parts of it than of Carthage. When I was at Florence, I have surprised some Florentines by telling them, that London was built, like their city, (where you often cross the bridges several times in a day,) on each side of the river; and yet that I had never been but on one side; for then I had never been in Southwark. When I was very young, and in the height of the opposition to my father, my mother wanted a large parcel of bugles; for what use I forget. As they

great offence to the people, in July 1791, by ordering martial law to be proclaimed against a mob which had assembled in the Champ de Mars to frame an address, recommending the deposition of Louis. For this step, which was approved of by the Assembly, he was arrested, tried, condemned, and put to death on the 11th of November, 1793.—Wright.

[1] Called 'Peace, Ignominy, and Destruction.'—Cunningham.

were then out of fashion, she could get none. At last, she was told of a quantity in a little shop in an obscure alley in the City. We drove thither; found a great stock; she bought it, and bade the proprietor send it home. He said, "Whither?" "To Sir Robert Walpole's." He asked coolly, "Who is Sir Robert Walpole?"

This is very like Cambridge, who tells you three stories to make you understand a fourth. In short, t'other morning a gentleman made me a visit, and asked if I had heard of the great misfortune that had happened? The Albion Mills are burnt down. I asked where they were; supposing they were powder-mills in the country, that had blown up. I had literally never seen or heard of the spacious lofty building at the end of Blackfriars Bridge. At first it was supposed maliciously burnt, and it is certain the mob stood and enjoyed the conflagration, as of a monopoly; but it had been on fire, and it was thought extinguished. The building had cost a hundred thousand pounds; and the loss in corn and flour is calculated at a hundred and forty thousand. I do not answer for the truth of the sums; but it is certain that the Palace-yard and part of St. James's Park were covered with half-burnt grain.

This accident, and my introduction, have helped me to a good part of my letter; for you must have observed, that even in this overgrown town the winter has not been productive of events. Good night! I have two days to wait for a letter that I may answer. Stay; I should tell you, that I have been at Sir Joseph Banks's literary saturnalia,[1] where was a Parisian watch-maker, who produced the smallest automaton that I suppose was ever created. It was a rich snuff-box, not too large for a woman. On opening the lid, an enamelled bird started up, sat on the rim, turned round, fluttered its wings, and piped in a delightful tone the notes of different birds; particularly the jug-jug of the nightingale. It is the prettiest plaything you ever saw; the price tempting—only five hundred pounds. That economist, the Prince of Wales, could not resist it, and has bought one of those dicky-birds. If the maker finds such customers, he will not end like one of his profession here, who made the serpent in 'Orpheus and Eurydice;'[2] and who fell so deeply in love with his own works, that he did nothing afterwards but make serpents, of all sorts and sizes, till he was ruined and broke. I have

[1] Sir Joseph Banks, while president of the Royal Society, had a weekly evening-reception [at his house in Soho Square] of all persons distinguished in science or the arts.—WRIGHT.

[2] A celebrated opera.—WRIGHT.

not a tittle to add—but that the Lord Mayor [Boydell] did not fetch Madame du Barry in the City-Royal coach, but kept her to dinner. She is gone; but returns in April.'[1]

2535. TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, Saturday, March 19, 1791.

I DID not begin my letter on customary Friday, because I had nothing new to tell or to say. The town lies fallow—not an incident worth repeating as far as I know. Parliament manufactures only bills, not politics. I never understood anything useful; and, now that my time and connections are shrunk to so narrow a compass, what business have I with business? As I have mended considerably for the last four days, and as we have had a fortnight of soft warm weather, and a south-west wind to-day, I have ventured hither for change of air, and to give orders about some repairs at Cliveden; which, by the way, Mr. Henry Bunbury, two days ago, proposed to take off my hands for his life. I really do not think I accepted his offer. I shall return to town on Monday, and hope to find a letter to answer—or what will this do?

Berkeley Square, Monday evening.

I am returned, and find the only letter I dreaded, and the only one, I trust, that I shall ever not be impatient to receive from you. Though ten thousand times kinder than I deserve, it wounds my heart; as I find I have hurt two of the persons I love the best upon earth, and whom I am most constantly studying to please and serve.

[1] "Poor thing! she never returned, but perished, as is well known, with many other victims. I was well acquainted with a French gentleman, very recently dead, who was an involuntary witness of this execution, and who has often given me details of it. He was then a lad of about seventeen, and had been riding with a friend of his in the environs of Paris. On their return through the Champs Elysées, they found themselves in the Place Louis XV. surrounded by a dense mob, and the guillotine in full operation. His first impulse was to spur his horse, and avoid the horrid sight; but he was checked by his friend, who was more prudent, and alive to their danger, for the crowd had already begun to grumble and to cry, 'Gare aux Aristocrats.' So they were forced to pull up their horses and remain silent spectators of this horrid tragedy. He said her shrieks were dreadful to hear; she struggled with the executioners, and they were near enough to hear her exclaim, 'Ah, Monsieur, ne me faites pas du mal,' or, 'Vous allez me faire du mal,'—he was not sure which. The scene over, they were forced to take off their hats, and shout with the rest, 'Vive la République.' It was not without difficulty that they got safe to their homes. He soon after entered the army, and so escaped; he told me he had often since dreamt of her cries. He had no vivid recollection of her person." *John Riddell (MS.).*—CUNNINGHAM.

That I soon repented of my murmurs, you have seen by my subsequent letters. The truth, as you may have perceived, though no excuse, was, that I had thought myself dying, and should never see you more; that I was extremely weak and low when Mrs. Damer's letter arrived, and mentioned her supposing I should not see you till spring twelvemonth. That terrible sentence recalled Mr. Batt's being the first to assure me of your going abroad, when I had concluded you had laid aside the design. I did sincerely allow that in both instances you had acted from tenderness in concealing your intentions; but, as I knew I could better bear the information from yourselves than from others, I thought it unfriendly to let me learn from others what interested me so deeply: yet I do not in the least excuse my conduct; no, I condemn it in every light, and shall never forgive myself if you do not promise me to be guided entirely by your own convenience and inclinations about your return.

I am perfectly well again, and just as likely to live one year as half an one. Indulge your pleasure in being abroad while you are there. I am now reasonable enough to enjoy your happiness as my own; and, since you are most kind when I least deserve it, how can I express my gratitude for giving up the scruple that was so distressing to me? Convince me you are in earnest by giving me notice that you will write to Charing-cross while the Neapolitans are at Florence.[1] I will look on that as a clearer proof of your forgiving my criminal letter, than your return before you like it. It is most sure that nothing is more solid or less personal than my friendship for you two; and even my complaining letter, though unjust and unreasonable, proved that the nearer I thought myself to quitting the world, the more my heart was set on my two friends; nay, *they* had occupied the busiest moments of my illness as well as the most fretful ones.

Forgive then, my dearest friends, what could proceed from nothing but too impatient affection. You say most truly you did not deserve my complaints: your patience and temper under them make me but the more in the wrong; and to have hurt you, who have known but too much grief, is such a contradiction to the whole turn of my mind ever since I knew you, that I believe my

[1] His correspondents, to settle his mind as to the certainty of their return at the time they had promised, had assured him, that no financial difficulties should stand in the way; which is what he means by sending to Charing-cross (to Drummond his banker). No such difficulties occurred. The correspondence, therefore, with Charing cross never took place.—M. B.

weakness from illness was beyond even what I suspected. It is sure that, when I am in my perfect senses, the whole bent of my thoughts is to promote your and your sister's felicity; and you know nothing can give me satisfaction like your allowing me to be of use to you. I speak honestly, notwithstanding my unjust letter; I had rather serve you than see you. Here let me finish this subject: I do not think I shall be faulty to you again.

The Mother Gunning has published her letter to the Duke of Argyll, and it disappoints everybody. It is neither romantic, nor entertaining, nor abusive, but on the General and Mr. and Mrs. Bowen, and the General's groom. On the Bowens it is so immeasurably scurrilous, that I think they must prosecute her. She accuses them and her husband of a conspiracy to betray and ruin his own daughter, without even attempting to assign a motive to them. Of the House of Argyll she says not a word. In short, it is a most dull incoherent rhapsody, that gives no account at all of the story that gave origin to her book, and at which no mortal could guess from it; and the 246 pages contain nothing but invectives on her four supposed enemies, and endless tiresome encomiums on the virtues of her *glorious darling*, and the unspottable innocence of that harmless lambkin. I would not even send it to you if I had an opportunity—you would not have patience to go through it; and there, I suppose, the absurd legend will end. I am heartily tired of it. Adieu!

P.S. That ever *I* should give *you two* an uneasy moment! Oh! forgive me: yet I do not deserve pardon in my own eyes; and less in my own heart.

2536. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Berkeley Square, Sunday, March 27, 1791.

Though I begin my despatch to-day, I think I shall change my post-days, as I hinted, from Tuesdays to Fridays; not only as more commodious for learning news for you, but as I do not receive your letters generally but on Mondays, I have less time to answer. I have an additional reason for delay this week. Mr. Pitt has notified that he is to deliver a message from the King to-morrow, to the House of Commons on the situation of Europe; and should there be a long debate, I may not gather the particulars till Tuesday morn-

ing, and if my levee lasts late, shall not have time to write to you. Oh! now are you all impatient to hear *that* message; I am sorry to say that I fear it is to be a warlike one. The Autocratrix swears, d—n her eyes! she *will* hack her way to Constantinople through the blood of one hundred thousand more Turks, and that we are very impertinent for sending her a card with a sprig of olive. On the other hand, Prussia bounces and huffs and claims our promise of helping him to make peace by helping him to make war; and so, in the most charitable and pacific way in the world, we are, they say, to send twenty ships to the Baltic, and half as many to the Black Sea,—this little Britain, commonly called Great Britain, is to dictate to Petersburg and Bengal, and cover Constantinople under those wings that reach from the North Pole to the farthest East! I am mighty sorry for it, and hope we shall not prove a jackdaw that pretends to dress itself in the plumes of imperial eagles!

If we bounce abroad, we are more forgiving at home: a gentleman [the Prince of Wales] who lives at the east end of St. James's Park, has been sent for by a lady [the Queen] who has a large house at the west end, and they have kissed and are friends; which he notified by toasting her health in a bumper at a club the other day. I know no circumstances, but am glad of it; I love peace, public or private: not so the chieftains of the contending theatres of harmony. Taylor, in wondrous respectful terms and full of affliction, has printed in the newspapers an advertisement, declaring that the Marquis's honour (the Lord Chamberlain[1]) did in one season, and that an unprofitable one, send *orders* (you know, that is, tickets of admission without paying) into the Opera-house, to the loss of the managers of four hundred pounds—servants, it is supposed, and Hertfordshire voters eke: and, moreover, that it has been sworn in Chancery that his Lordship, not as Lord Chamberlain, has stipulated with Gallini and O'Reilly that he, his heirs and assigns, should preserve the power of giving those detrimental *orders* in perpetuity. The immunity is a little new: former Chamberlains, it seems, even *durante officio*, have not exercised the privilege—if they had it.

One word more of the Gunnings. Captain Bowen informed the authoress, by the channel of the papers, that he shall prosecute her for the libel. She answered, by the same conveyance, that she is extremely glad of it. But there is a difficulty—unless the prosecution

[1] The first Marquis of Salisbury, died 1823.—CUNNINGHAM.

is criminal, it is thought that Madam being *femme couverte*, the charge must be made against her husband; and, to be sure, it would be droll that the General should be attacked for not hindering his wife from writing a libel, that is more virulent against him himself than anybody! Another little circumstance has come out: till the other day he did not know that he had claimed descent from Charlemagne in the newspapers; which, therefore, is referred to the same manufacture as the other forgeries. The General said, "It is true, I am well born; but I know no such family in Ireland as the Charlemagnes."

Lord Ossory has just been here, and told me that Gunnilda has written to Lord Blandford, in her own name and hand, begging his pardon (for promising herself marriage in his name), but imputing the first thought to his grandmother, whom she probably inspired to think of it. This letter the Duchess of Marlborough carried to the Duchess of Bedford, to open her eyes on her *protegée*, but with not much success; for what signify eyes, when the rest of the head is gone? She only said, "You may be easy, for both mother and daughter are gone to France"—no doubt, on finding her Grace's money not so forthcoming as her countenance, and terrified by Captain Bowen's prosecution—and there, I hope, will terminate that strange story; for in France there is not a Marquis left to marry her. One has heard of nothing else for these seven months; and it requires some ingenuity to keep up the attention of such a capital as London for above half a year together.

I supped on Thursday at Mrs. Buller's with the Conways and Mount-Edgcumbes; and the next night at Lady Aylesbury's with the same company, and Lady Augusta Clavering.[1] You know, on the famous night at your house when Gunnilda pretended that her father had received Lord Blandford's appointment of the wedding-day, we suspected, when they were gone, that we had seen doubts in Lady Augusta's face, and I desired her uncle, Lord Frederick, to ask her if we had guessed right; but she protests she had then no suspicion.

I have determined to send this away on Tuesday, whether I know the details of the temple of Janus to-morrow in time or not, that you may give yourselves airs of importance, if the Turin ministers pretend to tell you news of your own country that you do not know. You may say, your chargé des affaires sent you word of the King's

[1] Eldest daughter of John, Duke of Argyle, who died in 1806.—CUNNINGHAM.

message; and you may be mysterious about the rest; for mystery in the diplomatic dictionary is construed knowledge, though, like a Hebrew word, it means the reverse too.

Sunday night.

I have been at *White Pussy's*[1] this evening. She asked much after *you's*. I did not think her Lord looked as if *he* would drive Prince Potemkin out of Bulgaria; but we trust that a new Frederick of Prussia and a new William Pitt will. Could they lay Catherine in the Black Sea, as ghosts used to be laid in the Red, the world would be obliged to them.

2537. TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, Sunday night, April 3, 1791.

Oh! what a shocking accident! Oh! how I detest your going abroad more than I have done yet in my crossest mood! You escaped the storm on the 10th of October, that gave me such an alarm; you passed unhurt through the cannibals of France and their republic of larrons and poissardes, who terrified me sufficiently; but I never expected that you would dash yourself to pieces at Pisa![2] You say I love truth, and that you have told me the exact truth; but how can fear believe?

How I hate a party of pleasure! It never turns out well: fools fall out, and sensible people fall down! Still I thank you a million of times for writing yourself. If Miss Agnes had written for you, I confess I should have been ten times more alarmed than I am; and yet I am alarmed enough.

Not to torment you more with my fears, when I hope you are almost recovered, I will answer the rest of your letter. General O'Hara I have unluckily not met yet. He is so dispersed, and I am so confined in my resorts and so seldom dine from home, that I have not seen him, even at General Conway's. When I do, can you imagine that we shall not talk of you two—yes; and your accident, I am sure, will be the chief topic. As our fleets are to dethrone Catherine Petruchi*a*, O'Hara will probably not be sent to Siberia. *Apropos* to Catherine and Petruchi*o*. I supped with their

[1] Elizabeth Cary, wife of Lord Amherst, at this time commander-in-chief.—Wright.

[2] Miss Berry had fallen down a bank in the neighbourhood of Pisa, and received a severe cut on the nose.—Wright.

representatives, Kemble and Mrs. Siddons, t'other night at Miss Farren's:[1] the Hothams[2] were there too, and Mrs. Anderson,[3] who treated the players with acting as many characters as ever they did, particularly Gunnilda and Lady Clackmannan.[4] Mrs. Siddons is leaner, but looks well: she has played Jane Shore and Desdemona, and is to play in 'The Gamester;' all the parts she will act this year. Kemble, they say, shone in Othello.

Mrs. Damer has been received at Elvas with all military honours, and a banquet, by order of Mello, formerly ambassador here. It was handsome in him, but must have distressed her, who is so void of ostentation and love of show. Miss Boyle,[5] who no more than Miss Pulteney,[6] has let herself be snapped up by lovers of her fortune, is going to Italy for a year with Lord and Lady Malden.[7]

Berkeley Square, Monday after dinner.

Mirabeau is dead; ay, miraculously; for it was of a putrid fever (that began in his heart). Dr. Price is dying also.[8] That Mr. Berry with so much good nature and good sense should be staggered, I do not wonder. Nobody is more devoted to liberty than I am. It is therefore that I abhor the National Assembly, whose outrageous violence has given, I fear, a lasting wound to the cause; for anarchy is despotism in the hands of thousands. A lion attacks but when hungry or provoked; but who can live in a desert full of hyænas?—nobody but Mr. Bruce; and we have only his word for it. Here is started up another corsair; one Paine, from America, who has published an answer[9] to Mr. Burke. His doctrines go to the

[1] "I have often heard of these 'charming suppers' from the late Lord Berwick (the Diplomatist), who used to say, 'Ah, those charming suppers!' at the Bow-Window House in Green Street [Grosvenor Square], where I was admitted when I was a *very young* man, and where one used to meet General Conway and Lady Ailesbury, Mrs. Damer, the old Duchess of Leinster, and the Ogilvies; General Burgoyne, Fitzpatrick, *your* Father, and all the pleasantest people in London; and then he generally ended with eulogies on her acting in 'The Heiress,' 'Ah! *that* game at chess, *that* game at chess, I shall never see anything like it again.'" *John Riddell (MS.).*—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] Sir Charles Hotham Thompson, married to Lady Dorothy Hobart, sister of John second Earl of Buckinghamshire.—WRIGHT.

[3] A daughter of Lady Cecilia Johnstone's, married to a brother of Charles Anderson Pelham, Lord Yarborough.—WRIGHT.

[4] A nickname, which had been given by the writer to a lady of the society.—WRIGHT.

[5] Afterwards Lady Henry Fitzgerald. See p. 104, note [2].—CUNNINGHAM.

[6] Afterwards married to Sir James Murray.—WRIGHT.

[7] Lord Malden, afterwards Earl of Essex, was a first-cousin of Miss Boyle's. This journey did not take place.—WRIGHT.

[8] Dr. Price died on the 19th of April.—WRIGHT.

[9] The first part of 'The Rights of Man.'—CUNNINGHAM.

extremity of levelling; and his style is so coarse, that you would think he meant to degrade the language as much as the government: here is one of his delicate paragraphs:—"We do not want a king, or lords of the bedchamber, or lords of the kitchen," &c. This rhetoric, I suppose, was calculated for our poissardes.

2538. TO MISS BERRY.

Berkeley Square, Friday night, April 15, 1791.

My preface will be short; for I have nothing to tell, and a great deal that I am waiting most impatiently to hear; all which, however, may be couched in these two phrases,—"I am quite recovered of my fall, and my nose will not be the worse for it"—for with all my pretences, I cannot help having that nose a little upon my spirits; though if it were flat, I should love it as much as ever, for the sake of the head and heart that belong to it. I have seen O'Hara with his face as ruddy and black, and his teeth as white as ever; and as fond of you too, and as grieved for your fall as anybody—but I. He has got a better regiment.

Strawberry Hill, Sunday night, past eleven.

You chose your time ill for going abroad this year; England never saw such a spring since it was fifteen years old. The warmth, blossoms, and verdure are unparalleled. I am just come from Richmond, having first called on Lady Di, who is designing and painting pictures for prints to Dryden's 'Fables.'[1] Oh! she has done two most beautiful: one, of Emily walking in the garden, and Palamon seeing her from the tower; the other, a noble, free composition of Theseus parting the rivals, when fighting in the wood. They are not, as you will imagine, at all like the pictures in the 'Shakspeare Gallery:' no; *they* are worthy of Dryden.

I can tell you nothing at all certain of our war with Russia. If one believes the weather-glass of the Stocks, it will be peace: they had fallen to 71, and are risen again, and soberly, to 79. Fawkener, clerk of the council, sets out to-day or to-morrow for Berlin; probably, I hope, with an excuse. In the present case, I had much rather our Ministers were bullies than heroes: no mortal likes the war. The Court-majority lost thirteen of its former number at the beginning of the week, which put the Opposition into spirits: but,

[1] Published in folio, in 1797.—Wright.

pursuing their motions on Friday, twelve of the thirteen were recovered. Lord Onslow told me just now, at Madame de Boufflers's, that Lady Salisbury was brought to bed of a son and heir[1] last night, two hours after she came from the Opera; and that Madame du Barry dined yesterday with the Prince of Wales, at the Duke of Queensberry's, at Richmond. Thus you have all my news, such as it is; and I flatter myself no English at Pisa or Florence can boast of better intelligence than you—but for you, should I care about Madame du Barry or my Lady Salisbury, or which of them lies in or lies out?

Berkeley Square, Monday, April 18.

Oh! what a dear letter have I found, and from both at once; and with such a delightful bulletin! I should not be pleased with the idleness of the pencil, were it not owing to the chapter of health, which I prefer to everything. You order me to be particular about my own health: I have nothing to say about it, but that it is as good as before my last fit. Can I expect or desire more at my age? My ambition is to pass a summer, with you two established at Cliveden. I shall not reject more if they come; but one must not be presumptuous at seventy-three; and though my eyes, ears, teeth, motion, have still lasted to make life comfortable, I do not know that I should be enchanted if surviving any of them; and, having no desire to become a philosopher, I had rather be naturally cheerful than affectedly so: for patience I take to be only a resolution of holding one's tongue, and not complaining of what one feels—for does one feel or think the less for not owning it?

Though London increases every day, and Mr. Herschel has just discovered a new square or circus somewhere by the New Road in the Via Lactea, where the cows used to be fed, I believe you will think the town cannot hold all its inhabitants; so prodigiously the population is augmented. I have twice been going to stop my coach in Piccadilly, (and the same has happened to Lady Aylesbury,) thinking there was a mob; and it was only nymphs and swains sauntering or trudging. T'other morning, *i. e.* at two o'clock, I went to see Mrs. Garrick and Miss Hannah More at the Adelphi, and was stopped five times before I reached Northumberland-house; for the tides of coaches, chariots, curricles, phaetons, &c. are endless. Indeed, the town is so extended, that the breed of chairs is almost lost;

[1] James-Brownlow-William Gascoyne Cecil, the second and (1858) present Marquis of Salisbury.—CUNNINGHAM.

for Hercules and Atlas could not carry anybody from one end of this enormous capital to the other. How magnified would be the error of the young woman at St. Helena, who, some years ago, said to a captain of an Indiaman, "I suppose London is very empty, when the India ships come out." Don't make me excuses, then, for short letters; nor trouble yourself a moment to lengthen them. You compare little towns to quiet times, which do not feed history; and most justly. If the vagaries of London can be comprised once a week in three or four pages of small quarto paper, and not always that, how should little Pisa furnish an equal export? When Pisa was at war with the rival republic of Milan, Machiavel was put to it to describe a battle, the slaughter in which amounted to one man slain; and he was trampled to death, by being thrown down and battered in his husk of complete armour; as I remember reading above fifty years ago at Florence.

Eleven at night.

Oh! mercy! I am just come from Mrs. Buller's, having left a very pleasant set at Lady Herries'[1]—and for such a collection! Eight or ten women and girls, not one of whom I knew by sight; a German Count, as stiff and upright as the inflexible Dowager of Beaufort; a fat Dean and his wife, he speaking Cornish, and of having dined to-day at Lambeth; four young officers, friends of the boy Buller,[2] who played with one of them at tric-trac, while the others made with the Misses a still more noisy commerce; and not a creature but Mrs. Cholmondely, who went away immediately, and her son, who was speechless with the head-ache, that I was the least acquainted with: and, to add to my sufferings, the Count would talk to me of les beaux arts, of which he knows no more than an oyster. At last came in Mrs. Blair, whom I know as little; but she asked so kindly after you two, and was so anxious about your fall and your return, that I grew quite fond of her, and beg you would love her for my sake, as I do for yours. Good night!

I have this moment received a card from the Duchess-dowager of Ancaster, to summon me for to-morrow at three o'clock—I suppose to sign Lord Cholmondeley's marriage-articles with her daughter.[3] The wedding is to be this day sevennight. Save me, my old stars, from wedding-dinners! But I trust they are not of this age. I

[1] The wife of the banker in St. James's-street.—WRIGHT.
[2] Mrs. Buller's only child.—WRIGHT.
[3] Lady Charlotte Bertie.—WRIGHT.

should sooner expect Hymen to jump out of a curricle, and walk into the Duchess's dressing-room in boots and a dirty shirt.

2539. TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, April 23, 1791.

To-day, when the town is staring at the sudden resignation of the Duke of Leeds,[1] asking the reason, and gaping to know who will succeed him, I am come hither with an indifference that might pass for philosophy; as the true cause is not known, which it seldom is. Don't tell Europe; but I really am come to look at the repairs of Cliveden, and how they go on; not without an eye to the lilacs and the apple-blossoms: for even *self* can find a corner to wriggle into, though friendship may fit out the vessel. Mr. Berry may, perhaps, wish I had more political curiosity; but as I must return to town on Monday for Lord Cholmondeley's wedding, I may hear before the departure of the post, if the seals are given: for the Duke's reasons, should they be assigned, shall one be certain? His intention was not even whispered till Wednesday evening. The news from India, so long expected, are not *couleur de rose*, but *de sang:* a detachment has been defeated by Tippoo Saib, and Lord Cornwallis is gone to take the command of the army himself. Will the East be more propitious to him than the West?

The Abolition of the Slave-Trade has been rejected by the House of Commons,[2] though Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox united earnestly to carry it: but commerce chinked its purse, and that sound is generally prevalent with the majority; and humanity's tears, and eloquence's figures and arguments, had no more effect than on those patrons of liberty, the National Assembly of France; who, while they proclaim the rights of men, did not choose to admit the sable moiety of mankind to a participation of those benefits

Captain Bowen has published a little pamphlet of affidavits, which prove that Gunnilda attempted to bribe her father's [General Gunning's] groom to perjure himself; but he begged to be excused. Nothing more appears against the mother, but that Miss pretended

[1] Francis Godolphin Osborne, fifth Duke of Leeds [died 1799]. In 1776, he was appointed a lord of the bedchamber, and in 1783, secretary of state for foreign affairs. He was succeeded in the office by Lord Grenville.—Wright.

[2] The numbers on the division were, for the abolition 88, against it 163.—Wright.

her mamma had an aversion to Lord Lorn, (an aversion to a Marquis!) and that she did not dare to acquaint so tender a parent with her lasting passion for him. Still I am persuaded that both the mother and the aunt were in the plot, whatever it was. I saw Lady Cecilia last night, and made all your speeches, and received their value in return for you.

Good Hannah More is killing herself by a new fit of benevolence, about a young girl with a great fortune, who has been taken from school at Bristol to Gretna Green, and cannot be discovered; nor the apothecary who stole her. Mrs. Garrick, who suspects, as I do, that Miss Europa is not very angry with Mr. Jupiter, had very warm words, a few nights ago, at the Bishop of London's, with Lady Beaumont; but I diverted the quarrel by starting the stale story of the Gunning. You know Lady Beaumont's eagerness; she is ready to hang the apothecary with her own hands; and he certainly is criminal enough. Poor Hannah lives with attorneys and Sir Sampson Wright;[1] and I have seen her but once since she came to town. Her ungrateful protégée, the Milkwoman, has published her Tragedy, and dedicated it to a patron as worthy as herself, the Earl-bishop of Derry.

At night.

Well! our wedding is over very properly, though with little ceremony; for the men were in frocks and white waistcoats; most of the women in white, and no diamonds but on the Duke's [Ancaster's] wife; and nothing of ancient fashion but two bride-maids. The endowing purse, I believe, has been left off, ever since broad-pieces were called in and melted down. We were but eighteen persons in all, chiefly near relations of each side; and of each side a friend or two: of the first sort, the Greatheds. Sir Peter Burrell gave away the bride. The poor Duchess-mother wept excessively: she is now left quite alone; her two daughters married, and her other children dead—she herself, I fear, in a very dangerous way. She goes directly to Spa, where the new-married are to meet her. We all separated in an hour-and-a-half. The Elliot girl[2] was there, and is pretty: she rolls in the numerous list of my nephews and nieces.

[1] In a letter, written on this day, Miss More says,—"My time has been literally passed with thief-takers, officers of justice, and such pretty kind of people." The young lady, who was an heiress, and only fourteen years of age, had been trepanned away from school. All the efforts to discover the victim proved fruitless, the poor girl having been betrayed into a marriage, and carried to the Continent.—Wright.

[2] A natural daughter of Lord Cholmondeley.—Wright.

I am now told that our Indian skirmish was a victory, and that Tippoo Saib, and all his cavalry and elephants, ran away; but sure I am, that the first impression made on me by those who spread the news, was not triumphant; nor can I enjoy success in that country, which we have so abominably usurped and plundered. You must wait for a new Secretary of State till next post. The Duke of Leeds is said to have resigned from bad health. The Ducs de Richelieu[1] and De Pienne, and Madame de St. Priest, are arrived here. Mr. Fawkener does not go to Berlin till Wednesday: still the Stocks do not believe in the war.

I have exhausted my gazette; and this being both Easter and Newmarket week, I may possibly have nothing to tell you by to-morrow se'nnight's post, and may wait till Friday se'nnight: of which I give you notice, lest you should think I have had a fall, and hurt my nose; which I know gives one's friend a dreadful alarm. Good night!

P.S. I never saw such a blotted letter: I don't know how you will read it. I am so earnest when writing to you two, that I omit half the words, and write too small; but I will try to mend.

2540. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Monday noon, April 25, 1791.

You flew away, Madam, without clapping your wings or giving the least notice; and by your ordering me to send you news, it looks as if you were taking roost—I hope, not yet. I did perch on my opening lilacs on Saturday, but was obliged to return just now for my nephew Lord Cholmondeley's match *with the charming over the way*, which, I hear, is to be very fine in clothes and lace, Lady Ducie having revived that old-fashioned, and I think, absurd, finery. It is to be this evening.

Easter and my absence makes me totally ignorant of news, but what I left last week, now a little stale; and I have seen nobody yet to refresh that little or much (for I know not which either of the articles imports, I mean the Indian news and the resignation of the Duke of Leeds). The first was dispersed as a defeat; but on Friday evening, like many defeats, was construed into a victory.

[1] Armand-Emanuel du Plessis, Duc de Richelieu; died 1822.—Wright.

Why the Duke retired, and whether he too is not to rally and have some other post, and who is to cross over and figure in with him, I cannot tell; two or three have been named—but it is as well not to know, as to send you falsehoods.

Last night I was at Richmond with the Birons and Boufflers. The young Duc de Richelieu, of a very different character from his grandfather and father, and consequently very amiable, is arrived, and the Duc de Pienne, and Madame de St. Priest and her husband following. The horrors at Paris increase, and Mirabeau's death will probably let them widely loose; for his abilities being almost as great as his villanies, there seems to be nobody left with parts enough to control the rest. Anarchy must stride on, and people will find out that a dissolution of all government is not the best way of reforming even the worst. Crimes made some kind of government originally necessary; but, till now, nobody ever thought that giving the utmost latitude to all crimes, was the surest mode of keeping mankind in order and happy; and yet, with that universal indulgence of the rights of men, the French prisons are twenty times fuller than ever they were—except of assassins and plunderers! It is my opinion, that some of the National Assembly will, ere long, dislike being exposed to armies of banditti, and not find their own eighteen livres a day perfectly secure; yet I shall not wonder if Mirabeau's rapid wealth should encourage other beggarly innovators. Adieu! Madam, but I hope not for long, and that you will return.

2541. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, April 30, 1791.

I THANK your Ladyship for your felicitation on my nephew's marriage. It is certainly a proper one, and suitable enough in age, rank, fortune, and good nature; but it was far from a fine or ceremonious wedding. We were but eighteen persons present; nobody but the reigning Duchess of Ancaster had a diamond; and, except myself, (who had an inkling of silver in my waistcoat, though since my abandoning Courts and public places I have left off gold and silver,) the men were so undrest, that had they been dirty too, they might have gone afterwards to the largest assembly in town: not so my Lord Cardigan's wedding, for which the King and Queen make new clothes—an honour unprecedented, at least for two centuries.

King James I., perhaps, was very fine at the marriage of some of his buffoons.

The uproar is begun at Paris, and everybody that can is leaving it. Three or four of their *late* dukes are arrived, and La Fayette is expected. The Duke of Orleans gains ground, for he has some money left; but having neither character nor courage, it shows how little exists of either. Mobs can destroy a government for a time, but it requires the greatest talents and the greatest firmness—ay, and time too, to recompose and establish one. The French might have had a good government, if the National Assembly had had sense, experience, moderation, and integrity; but wanting all, they have given a lasting wound to liberty. They have acted, as that nation has always done, from the fashion of the hour, and with their innate qualities, cruelty and insolence: and when this hurricane is blown over, the anarchy of France will always be quoted as worse than despotism; and it should be remembered that an attempt to suppress general prejudices by violence and a total change, does but inflame and root those prejudices more deeply in the sufferers. What hundred thousands of lives did *the Reformation* cost? And was it general at last? What feeling man would have been Luther if he could have foreseen the blood he should occasion to be spilt? For Calvin, he was a monster. His opposing the Papacy, and burning Servetus, proved him as bad, if not worse, than any of the popes. How different are English and French! How temperate are the Americans! How unlike the villain Mirabeau to Washington! How odious is a reformer who acts from ambition or interest!—and what are moments of gratified ambition or interest to endless obloquy!

Our constitution proves that no good government can be formed at once, or at once reformed; and reason, without experience, would tell one the same, for nature does not produce at the same period a number of great men enough to comprehend all the abuses that ought to be corrected in any system, and at the same time to foresee the greater evils that would arise from various alterations; for good and evil are so intermixed in human affairs in a series of ages, that it would require the omnipotent hand of the Creator to separate the bran from the chaff; and since he has permitted the intermixture, and not revealed his secret, it becomes us, though bound to aim at the amendment of abuses, to proceed with diffidence and a timid hand. A presumptuous Alexander may cut a Gordian knot with his sword; and I wish it had never been worse occupied—but perhaps the poor knot hurt nothing but *his*

pride; and to be sure his time would have been better employed in continuing to try to unravel it than in drawing his sword on any other occasion.

The Duke of Bedford[1] does me a great deal too much honour, Madam; but I must believe that I am chiefly indebted to your Ladyship's partiality, who have mentioned me too favourably in his hearing. If one is spoken of by friends, it is certainly with omission of one's faults, weaknesses, and deficiencies; and then how is the person to whom one has been commended, disappointed! One does not answer to the idea conceived, and all the defects surprise: but seriously, Madam, how could I, approaching seventy-four, lame, dining alone at a strange hour, with a decaying memory, or remembering nothing but old tales, unacquainted with the present world, and conversing only or but seldom with any but the few old acquaintance I have left, be fit company for the Duke of Bedford?

[1] I cannot resist transcribing from the memoranda of Lord Ossory the following account of the death of Francis, Duke of Bedford, in 1802:—

"On February 27th, 1802, I went over to Woburn, hearing of the Duke of Bedford's dangerous illness. I had observed him unwell a few days before. There I found Dr. Kerr, who explained to me the great necessity and urgency of the case, as to the operation, which he seemed much inclined to undertake before the other surgeons arrived; but the inclination of the Duke to wait, and other circumstances, caused it to be delayed until about half-past six o'clock. It was performed very successfully by Earle, but was found a bad case of the sort, complicated, the intestine much inflamed and discoloured. However, it was said, the next day, that things were in a better state than there was any right to expect; at least, I was told so by Halifax. However, I heard of a nausea that day, which gave me unfavourable presentiments. The progress of the disease was not favourable, and the symptoms were very bad on Monday morning, till twelve; from that time, till five or six, hopes began to revive; then they all vanished, and he was given over, and on Monday morning, March the 2nd, about half-past eleven, he expired, in a manner in Lord John's arms.

"Thus died Francis, Duke of Bedford, with a sort of similarity of fate to his father, both of whom I loved with much affection and attachment.

"The Duke of Bedford's energetic and capacious mind, his enlarged way of thinking, and elevated sentiments, together with the habits and pursuits of his life, peculiarly qualified him for his high station and princely fortune. He was superior to bad education and disadvantages for forming his character, and turned out certainly a first-rate man, though not free from imperfections. His uprightness and truth were unequalled; his magnanimity, fortitude, and consideration, in his last moments, taken so unprepared as he was, were astonishing, and Dr. Kerr assured me, he never met with *such a man* at *such a time*.

"To have lost such a relation,—whom I had known from his earliest years, and in a manner, at that time, regarded as my son,—such a friend, and such a neighbour, makes a deep impression upon me. I can scarcely ride a mile about Ampthill, or any part of Bedfordshire, without seeing traces of his active spirit in improvements. To reflect that all this is swept away in a few days, and that he is this very day, March 11th, 1802, being carried to his grave, is like a dream. What a field for moralising!"
—R. Vernon Smith.

I know myself too well to clog his Grace's good nature and good breeding; and as I have never done anything that can make it worth curiosity's while to see me once even in my decrepitude, I am content to live in the Duke's good opinion only by the favourable opinion your Ladyship has given him of me. The poor Cross at Ampthill is very like me: it was small at first, a breath of wind has blown most of it away, only enough remains to preserve my name a little longer, and then the grass will cover us both.

2542. TO MISS BERRY.

Berkeley Square, May 12, 1791.

A LETTER from Florence (that of April 20th) does satisfy me about your nose, till I can see it with my own eyes; but I will own to you now, that my alarm at first went much farther. I dreaded lest so violent a fall upon rubbish might not have hurt your head; though all your letters since have proved how totally that escaped any danger. Yet your great kindness in writing to me yourself so immediately did not tranquillise me, and only proved your good-nature; but I will not detail my departed fears, nor need I prove my attachment to you two. If you were really my wives, I could not be more generally applied to for accounts of you; of which I am proud. I should be ashamed if, at my age, it were a ridiculous attachment; but don't be sorry for having been circumstantial. My fears did not spring thence, nor did I suspect your not having told the whole—no! but I apprehended the accident might be worse than you knew yourself.

Poor Hugh Conway,[1] though his life has long been safe, still suffers at times from his dreadful blow, and has not yet been able to come to town: nor would Lord Chatham's humanity put his ship into commission; which made him so unhappy, that poor Horatia,[2] doting on him as she does, wrote to beg he might be employed; preferring her own misery in parting with him to what she saw him suffer. Amiable conduct! but, happily, her suit did not prevail.

I am not at all surprised at the private interviews between Leopold[3] and C. I am persuaded that the first must and will take

[1] Lord Hugh Seymour Conway, brother of the then Marquis of Hertford.—WRIGHT.

[2] Lady Horatia Waldegrave, his wife.—WRIGHT.

[3] The Emperor Leopold, then at Florence; whither he had returned from Vienna, to inaugurate his son in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany.—WRIGHT.

more part than he has yet seemed to do, and so will others too; but as speculations are but guesses, I will say no more on the subject now; nor of your English and Irish travellers, none of whom I know. I have one general wish, that you may be amused while you stay, by the natives of any nation; and I thank you a thousand times for confirming your intention of returning by the beginning of November; which I should not desire *coolly*, but from the earnest wish of putting you in possession of Cliveden while I live: which everybody would approve, at least, not wonder at (Mr. Batt, to whom I have communicated my intention, does extremely); and the rest would follow of course, as I had done the same for Mrs. Clive. I smiled at your making excuses for your double letter. Do you think I would not give twelve pence to hear more of you and your proceedings, than a single sheet would contain?

The Prince is recovered: that is all the domestic news, except a most memorable debate last Friday, in the House of Commons. Mr. Fox had most imprudently thrown out a panegyric on the French revolution. His most considerable friends were much hurt, and protested to him against such sentiments. Burke went much farther, and vowed to attack these opinions. Great pains were taken to prevent such altercation, and the Prince of Wales is said to have written a dissuasive letter to Burke; but he was immoveable; and on Friday, on the Quebec Bill, he broke out, and sounded a trumpet against the plot, which he denounced as carrying on here. Prodigious clamours and interruption arose from Mr. Fox's friends; but he, though still applauding the French, burst into tears and lamentations on the loss of Burke's friendship, and endeavoured to make atonement; but in vain, though Burke wept too. In short, it was the most affecting scene possible; and undoubtedly an *unique* one, for both the commanders were earnest and *sincere*.[1] Yesterday,

[1] With the debate of this day terminated a friendship which had lasted more than the fourth part of a century. Mr. Wilberforce, in his Diary of the 6th of May, states, that he had endeavoured to prevent the quarrel; and in a letter to a friend, on the following day, he speaks of "the shameful spectacle of last night; a long-tried and close worldly connection of five-and-twenty-years trampled to pieces in the conflict of a single night!" The following anecdote, connected with this memorable evening, is related by Mr. Curwen, at that time member for Carlisle, in his 'Travels in Ireland:'—"The most powerful feelings were manifested on the adjournment of the House. While I was waiting for my carriage, Mr. Burke came to me and requested, as the night was wet, I would set him down. As soon as the carriage-door was shut, he complimented me on my being no friend to the revolutionary doctrines of the French; on which he spoke with great warmth for a few minutes, when he paused to afford me an opportunity of approving the view he had taken of those measures in

a second act was expected; but mutual friends prevailed, that the contest should not be renewed: nay, on the same bill, Mr. Fox made a profession of his faith, and declared he would venture his life in support of the *present* constitution by Kings, Lords, and Commons. In short, I never knew a wiser dissertation, if the newspapers deliver it justly; and I think all the writers in England cannot give more profound sense to Mr. Fox than he possesses. I know no more particulars, having seen nobody this morning yet. What shall I tell you else? We have expected Mrs. Damer from last night; and perhaps she may arrive before this sets out to-morrow.

Friday morning, May 13th.

Last night we were at Lady Frederick Campbell's,—the usual cribbage party, Conways, Mount-Edgcumbes, Johnstones. At past ten Mrs. Damer was announced! Her parents ran down into the hall, and I scrambled down some of the stairs. She looks vastly well, was in great spirits, and not at all fatigued; though she came from Dover, had been twelve hours at sea from Calais, and had rested but four days at Paris from Madrid. We supped, and stayed till one o'clock; and I shall go to her as soon as I am dressed. Madrid and the Escurial, she owns, have gained her a proselyte to painting, which her *statuarism* had totally engrossed—in her, no wonder. Of Titian she had no idea, nor have I a just one, though great faith, as at Venice all his works are now coal-black; but Rubens, she says, amazed her, and that in Spain he has even grace. Her father, yesterday morning, from pain remaining still in his shoulder from his fall, had it examined by Dr. Hunter; and a little bone of the collar was found to be broken, and he must wear his arm for some time in a sling. Miss Boyle, I heard last night, had consented to marry Lord Henry Fitzgerald. I think they have both chosen well, but I have chosen better. Adieu! Care spose!

the House. At the moment I could not help feeling disinclined to disguise my sentiments: Mr. Burke, catching hold of the check-string, furiously exclaimed, 'You are one of these people! set me down!' With some difficulty I restrained him;—we had then reached Charing-cross: a silence ensued, which was preserved till we reached his house in Gerard-street, when he hurried out of the carriage without speaking."—WRIGHT.

2543. TO MISS BERRY.

Berkeley Square, Thursday, May 19, 1791.

Your letter of the 29th, for which you are so good as to make excuses on not sending it to the post in time, did arrive but two days later than usual; and as it is now two months from the 16th of March, and I have had so many certificates of the prosperous state of your pretty nose, I attributed the delay to the elements, and took no panic. But how kindly punctual you are, when you charge yourself with an irregularity of two days! and when your letters are so charmingly long, and interest me so much in all you do! But make no more excuses. I reproach myself with occasioning so much waste of your time, that you might employ every hour; for it is impossible to see all that the Medicis had collected or encouraged in the loveliest little city, and in such beautiful environs—nor had I forgotten the Cascines, the only spot containing English verdure. Mrs. Damer is as well, if not better, than she has been a great while: her looks surprise everybody; to which, as she is tanned, her Spanish complexion contributes. She and I called, the night before last, on your friend Mrs. Cholmeley; and they are to make me a visit to-morrow morning, by their own appointment. At Dover Mrs. Damer heard the Gunnings are there: here, they are forgotten.

You are learning perspective, to take views: I am glad. Can one have too many resources in one's-self? Internal armour is more necessary to your sex, than weapons to ours. You have neither professions, nor politics, nor ways of getting money, like men; in any of which, whether successful or not, they are employed. Scandal and cards you will both always hate and despise, as much as you do now; and though I shall not flatter Mary so much as to suppose she will ever equal the extraordinary talent of Agnes in painting, yet, as Mary, like the scriptural Martha, is occupied in many things, she is quite in the right to add the pencil to her other amusements.

I knew the Duchesse de Brissac[1] a little, and but a little, in 1766. She was lively and seemed sensible, and had an excellent character.

[1] The Duc de Brissac was at this time commandant-general of Louis the Sixteenth's constitutional guard. In the following year he was denounced, and in the early days of September put to death at Versailles for his attachment to his unfortunate sovereign.—Wright.

Poor M. de Nivernois![1] to be deprived of that only remaining child too!—but, how many French one pities, and how many more one abhors! How dearly will even liberty be bought (if it shall prove to be obtained, which I neither think it is or will be) by every kind of injustice and violation of consciences! How little conscience can they have, who leave to others no option but between perjury and starving! The Prince de Chimay I do not know.

After answering the articles of yours, I shall add what I can of new. After several weeks spent in search of precedents for trials ceasing or not on a dissolution of Parliament, the Peers on Monday sat till three in the morning on the report; when the Chancellor and Lord Hawkesbury fought for the cessation, but were beaten by a large majority; which showed that Mr. Pitt has more weight (at present) in that House too, than—the diamonds of Bengal. Lord Hawkesbury protested. The trial recommences on Monday next, and has already cost the public fourteen thousand pounds; the accused, I suppose, much more.

The Countess of Albany[2] is not only in England, in London, but at this very moment, I believe, in the palace of St. James's—not restored by as rapid a revolution as the French, but, as was observed last night at supper at Lady Mount-Edgcumbe's, by that topsy-turvy-hood that characterises the present age. Within these two months the Pope has been burnt at Paris; Madame du Barry, mistress of Louis Quinze, has dined with the Lord Mayor of London [Boydell], and the Pretender's widow is presented to the Queen of Great Britain! She is to be introduced by her great-grandfather's niece, the young Countess of Aylesbury.[3] That curiosity should bring her hither, I do not quite wonder—still less, that she abhorred her husband; but methinks it is not very well-bred to his family, nor very sensible; but a new way of *passing eldest*.

Apropos: I hear there is a medal struck at Rome of her brother-in-law, as Henry IX.; which, as one of their Papal majesties was so abominably mean as to deny the royal title to the brother, though

[1] The Duc de Nivernois, who, at this time, was employed about the person of Louis the Sixteenth, was denounced by the infamous Chaumette, and cast into prison in September 1793, where he remained till 1796. He died in 1798.—WRIGHT.

[2] Louisa Maximiliana de Stolberg Gœdern, wife of the Pretender. After the death of Charles Edward in 1788, she travelled in Italy and France, and lived with her favourite, the celebrated Alfieri, to whom she is stated to have been privately married. She continued to reside at Paris, until the progress of the revolution compelled her to take refuge in England.—WRIGHT.

[3] Lady Anne Rawdon, sister to the first Marquis of Hastings.—WRIGHT.

for Rome he had lost a crown, I did not know they allow *his* brother to assume. I should be much obliged to you if you could get me one of those medals in copper; ay, and one of his brother, if there was one with the royal title. I have the father's and mother's, and all the Popes', in copper; but *my* Pope, Benedict XIV., is the last, and therefore I should be glad of one of each of his successors, if you can procure and bring them with little trouble. I should not be sorry to have one of the Grand Duke and his father; but they should be in copper, not only for my suite, but they are sharper than in silver.

Thursday night.

Well! I have had an exact account of the interview of the two Queens, from one who stood close to them. The Dowager was announced as Princess of Stolberg. She was well-dressed, and not at all embarrassed. The King talked to her a good deal; but about her passage, the sea, and general topics: the Queen in the same way, but less. Then she stood between the Dukes of Gloucester and Clarence, and had a good deal of conversation with the former; who, perhaps, may have met her in Italy. Not a word between her and the Princesses: nor did I hear of the Prince; but he was there, and probably spoke to her. The Queen looked at her earnestly. To add to the singularity of the day, it is the Queen's birth-day. Another odd accident: at the Opera at the Pantheon, Madame d'Albany was carried into the King's box, and sat there. It is not of a piece with her going to Court, that she seals with the royal arms. I have been told to-night, that you will not be able to get me a medal of the royal Cardinal, as very few were struck, and only for presents; so pray give yourself but little trouble about it.

Boswell has at last published his long-promised 'Life of Dr. Johnson,' in two volumes in quarto. I will give you an account of it when I have gone through it. I have already perceived, that in writing the history of Hudibras, Ralpho has not forgot himself—nor will others, I believe, forget *him!*

2544. TO MISS BERRY.

Berkeley Square, May 26, 1791.

I AM rich in letters from you: I received that by Lord Elgin's courier first, as you expected, and its elder the next day. You tell me mine entertain you; *tant mieux.* It is my wish, but my wonder; for I live so little in the world, that I do not know the present

generation by sight: for, though I pass by them in the streets, the hats with valences, the folds above the chin of the ladies, and the dirty shirts and shaggy hair of the young men, who have levelled nobility almost as much as the mobility in France have, have confounded all individuality. Besides, if I did go to public places and assemblies, which my going to roost earlier prevents, the bats and owls do not begin to fly abroad till far in the night, when they begin to see and be seen.' However, one of the empresses of fashion, the Duchess of Gordon, uses fifteen or sixteen hours of her four-and-twenty. I heard her journal of last Monday. She first went to Handel's music in the Abbey; she then clambered over the benches, and went to Hastings's trial in the Hall; after dinner, to the play; then to Lady Lucan's assembly; after that to Ranelagh, and returned to Mrs. Hobart's faro-table; gave a ball herself in the evening of that morning, into which she must have got a good way; and set out for Scotland the next day. Hercules could not have achieved a quarter of her labours in the same space of time. What will the Great Duke think of our Amazons, if he has letters opened, as the Emperor was wont! One of our Camillas,[2] but in a freer style, I hear, he saw (I fancy, just before your arrival); and he must have wondered at the familiarity of the Dame, and the nincompoophood of her Prince. Sir William Hamilton is arrived—his Nymph of the Attitudes[3] was too prudish to visit the rambling peeress.

The rest of my letter must be literary; for we have no news. Boswell's book is gossiping; but, having numbers of proper names, would be more readable, at least by me, were it reduced from two volumes to one: but there are are woful longueurs, both about his hero and himself, the *fidus Achates;* about whom one has not the smallest curiosity. But I wrong the original Achates: one is satisfied with his fidelity in keeping his master's secrets and weaknesses, which modern led-captains betray for their patron's glory and to hurt their own enemies; which Boswell has done shamefully, particularly against Mrs. Piozzi, and Mrs. Montagu, and Bishop Percy. Dr. Blagden says justly, that it is a new kind of libel, by which you may abuse anybody, by saying some dead person said so

[1] See p. 279.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] Lady Craven; who was at this time in Italy with the Margravine of Anspach. Lord Craven died at Lausanne in September, and the lady was married to the Margrave in October following.—WRIGHT.

[3] Miss Emma Harte, married, in the following September, to Sir William Hamilton —the lady, the infatuated attachment to whom has been said to have been "the only cloud that obscured the bright fame of the immortal Nelson."—WRIGHT.



and so of somebody alive. Often, indeed, Johnson made the most brutal speeches to living persons; for though he was good-natured at bottom, he was very ill-natured at top. He loved to dispute to show his superiority. If his opponents were weak, he told them they were fools; if they vanquished him, he was scurrilous—to nobody more than to Boswell himself, who was contemptible for flattering him so grossly, and for enduring the coarse things he was continually vomiting on Boswell's own country, Scotland. I expected, amongst the excommunicated, to find myself, but am very gently treated.[1] I never would be in the least acquainted with Johnson; or, as Boswell calls it, I had not a just value for him; which the biographer imputes to my resentment for the Doctor's putting bad arguments (purposely, out of Jacobitism,) into the speeches which he wrote fifty years ago for my father, in the 'Gentleman's Magazine;' which I did not read then, or ever knew Johnson wrote till Johnson died, nor have looked at since. Johnson's blind Toryism and known brutality kept me aloof; nor did I ever exchange a syllable with him: nay, I do not think I ever was in a room with him six times in my days. Boswell came to me, said Dr. Johnson was writing the 'Lives of the Poets,' and wished I would give him anecdotes of Mr. Gray. I said, very coldly, I had given what I knew to Mr. Mason. Boswell hummed and hawed, and then dropped, "I suppose you know Dr. Johnson does not admire Mr. Gray." Putting as much contempt as I could into my look and tone, I said, "Dr. Johnson don't!—humph!"—and with that monosyllable ended our interview.[1] After the Doctor's death, Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Boswell sent an ambling circular-letter to me, begging subscriptions for a Monument for him—the two last, I think, impertinently; as they could not but know my opinion, and could not suppose I would contribute to a Monument for one who had endeavoured, poor soul! to degrade my friend's superlative poetry. I would not deign to write an answer; but sent down word by my footman, as I would have done to parish officers with a brief, that I would not subscribe. In the two new volumes Johnson says, and very probably did, or is made to say, that Gray's poetry is *dull*, and that he was a *dull* man! The same oracle dislikes Prior, Swift, and Fielding. If an elephant could write a book, perhaps one that had read a great deal would say, that an Arabian horse is a very clumsy ungraceful animal. Pass to a better chapter!

[1] *Compare* Boswell's account in one of his recently published letters to Temple.—CUNNINGHAM.

Burke has published another pamphlet[1] against the French Revolution, in which he attacks it still more grievously. The beginning is very good; but it is not equal, nor quite so injudicious as parts of its predecessor; is far less brilliant, as well as much shorter: but, were it ever so long, his mind overflows with such a torrent of images, that he cannot be tedious. His invective against Rousseau is admirable, just, and new. Voltaire he passes almost contemptuously. I wish he had dissected Mirabeau too; and I grieve that he has omitted the violation of the consciences of the clergy, nor stigmatised those universal plunderers, the National Assembly, who gorge themselves with eighteen livres a day; which to many of them would, three years ago, have been astonishing opulence.

When you return, I shall lend you three volumes in quarto of another work, with which you will be delighted. They are state-letters in the reigns of Henry the Eighth, Mary, Elizabeth, and James; being the correspondence of the Talbot and Howard families, given by a Duke of Norfolk to the Heralds' Office; where they have lain for a century neglected, buried under dust, and unknown, till discovered by a Mr. Lodge, a genealogist, who, to gratify his passion, procured to be made a Poursuivant. Oh! how curious they are! Henry seizes an Alderman who refused to contribute to a benevolence; sends him to the army on the Borders; orders him to be exposed in the front line; and if that does not do, to be treated with the utmost rigour of military discipline. His daughter Bess is not less a Tudor. The mean, unworthy treatment of the Queen of Scots is striking; and you will find how Elizabeth's jealousy of her crown and her avarice were at war, and how the more ignoble passion predominated. But the most amusing passage is one in a private letter, as it paints the awe of children for their parents a *little* differently from modern habitudes. Mr. Talbot, second son of the Earl of Shrewsbury, was a member of the House of Commons, and was married. He writes to the Earl his father, and tells him, that a young woman of a very good character has been recommended to him for chambermaid to his wife, and if his Lordship does not disapprove of it, he will hire her. There are many letters of news, that are very entertaining too—but it is nine o'clock, and I must go to Lady Cecilia's.

[1] This was the 'Letter from Mr. Burke to a Member of the National Assembly.'—WRIGHT.

Friday.

The Conways, Mrs. Damer, the Farrens,[1] and Lord Mount-Edgcumbe supped at the Johnstones'. Lord Mount-Edgcumbe said excellently, that "Mademoiselle D'Eon is her own widow." I wish I had seen you both in your court-plis, at your presentation; but that is only one wish amongst a thousand.

2545. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Berkeley Square, June 2, 1791.

To the tune of 'The Cow with the crumpled Horn,' &c.

"This is the note that nobody wrote.

"This is the groom that carried the note that nobody wrote.

"This is Ma'am Gunning, who was so very cunning, to examine the groom that carried the note that nobody wrote.

"This is Ma'am Bowen, to whom it was owing, that Miss Minify Gunning was so very cunning, to examine the groom that carried the note that nobody wrote.

"These are the Marquises shy of the horn, who caused the maiden all for-*Lorn*, to become on a sudden so tattered and torn, that Miss Minify Gunning was so very cunning, to examine the groom, &c.

"These are the two Dukes, whose sharp rebukes made the two Marquises shy of the horn, and caused the maiden all for-*Lorn*, &c.

"This is the General somewhat too bold, whose head was so hot, though his heart was so cold; who proclaimed himself single before it was meet, and his wife and his daughter turned into the street, to please the two Dukes, whose sharp rebukes," &c.

This is not at all new; I have heard it once or twice imperfectly, but could not get a copy till now; and I think it will divert you for a moment, though the heroines are as much forgotten as Boadicea; nor have I heard of them since their arrival at Dover.

[1] "By the Farrens, he means Mrs. Farren and her daughter, who never left her mother, who continued to reside with her after her marriage with Lord Derby, and died in Grosvenor Square in 1803. Miss Farren's first patronesses and acquaintance in London were Lady Ailesbury and Mrs. Damer, I believe by the desire of the Duchess of Leinster, who knew something of her family in Ireland: *it is not true* that *she* was introduced to these ladies by Lord Derby (whom she did not then know), but just the reverse."—*John Riddell* (*MS.*).—CUNNINGHAM.

Well! I have seen Madame d'Albany,[1] who has not a ray of royalty about her. She has good eyes and teeth; but I think can have had no more beauty than remains, except youth. She is civil and easy, but German and ordinary. Lady Aylesbury made a small assemblage for her on Monday, and my curiosity is satisfied. Mr. Conway and Lady A., Lord and Lady Frederick Campbell, and Mrs. E. Hervey and Mrs. Hervey, breakfasted with me that morning at Strawberry, at the desire of the latter, who had never been there; and whose commendations were so promiscuous, that I saw she did not at all understand the style of the place. The day was north-easterly and cold, and wanting rain; and I was not sorry to return into town. I hope in five months to like staying there much better. Mrs. Damer, who returned in such Spanish health, has already caught an English north-eastern cold; with pain in all her limbs, and a little fever, and yesterday was not above two hours out of bed. Her father came to me from her before dinner, and left her better; and I shall go to her presently; and, this not departing till to-morrow, I hope to give you a still more favourable account. These two days may boldly assume the name of June, without the courtesy of England. Such weather makes me wish myself at Strawberry, whither I shall betake myself on Saturday.

2546. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Berkeley Square, June 8, 1791.

Your No. 34, that was interrupted, and of which the last date was of May 24th, I received on the 6th, and if I could find fault, it would be in the length; for I do not approve of your writing so much in hot weather, for, be it known to you ladies, that from the first of the month, June is not more June at Florence. My hay is crumbling away; and I have ordered it to be cut, as a sure way of bringing rain. I have a selfish reason, too, for remonstrating against long letters. I feel the season advancing, when mine will be piteous short; for what can I tell you from Twickenham in the

[1] "A most just description of her, as I saw and knew her at Florence in 1820. Besides being 'German and ordinary,' she was rather *sharp* and coarse. At that time she was supposed to be married to a French painter of talent, named Fabré. He had a very good collection of the works of Poussin and S. Rosa, which, at his death, he left to his native town, (I *think*) Montpelier." *John Riddell* (*MS.*)—Cunningham.

next three or four months? Scandal from Richmond and Hampton Court, or robberies at my own door? The latter, indeed, are blown already. I went to Strawberry on Saturday, to avoid the Birthday [4th June] crowd and squibs and crackers. At six I drove to Lord Strafford's, where his goods are to be sold by auction; his sister, Lady Anne [Conolly],[1] intending to pull down the house and rebuild it. I returned a quarter before seven; and in the interim between my Gothic gate and Ashe's Nursery, a gentleman and gentlewoman, in a one-horse chair and in the broad face of the sun, had been robbed by a single highwayman, *sans* mask. Ashe's mother and sister stood and saw it; but having no notion of a robbery at such an hour in the high-road, and before their men had left work, concluded it was an acquaintance of the robber's. I suppose Lady Cecilia Johnstone will not descend from her bedchamber to the drawing-room without life-guard men.

The Duke of Bedford[2] eclipsed the whole birthday by his clothes, equipage, and servants: six of the latter walked on the side of the coach to keep off the crowd—or to tempt it; for their liveries were worth an argosie. The Prince [of Wales] was gorgeous too: the latter is to give Madame d'Albany a dinner. She has been introduced to Mrs. Fitzherbert. You know I used to call Mrs. Cosway's concerts Charon's boat: now, methinks, London is so. I am glad Mrs. C.[osway] is with you; she is pleasing—but surely it is odd to drop a child and her husband and country all in a breath!

I am glad you are dis*franchised* of the exiles. We have several, I am told, here; but I strictly confine myself to those I knew formerly at Paris, and who all are quartered on Richmond-green. I went to them on Sunday evening, but found them gone to Lord Fitzwilliam's, the next house to Madame de Boufflers', to hear his organ; whither I followed them, and returned with them. The Comtesse Emilie played on her harp; then we all united at loto. I went home at twelve, unrobbed; and Lord Fitzwilliam, who asked much after you both, was to set out the next morning for Dublin, though intending to stay there but four days, and be back in three weeks.

I am sorry you did not hear all Monsieur de Lally Tollendal's[3] Tragedy, of which I have had a good account. I like his tribute to his father's memory. Of French politics you must be tired; and

[1] Lady Anne Wentworth, married to the Right Hon. Thomas Conolly.—WRIGHT.

[2] Francis, fifth Duke of Bedford: died 1802.—CUNNINGHAM.

[3] The celebrated Count Lally de Tollendal: died 1830. The subject of the tragedy alluded to was the fall of the Earl of Strafford.—WRIGHT.

so am I. Nothing appears to me to promise their chaos duration; consequently I expect more chaos, the sediment of which is commonly despotism. Poland ought to make the French blush; but that, they are not apt to do on any occasion. Let us return to Strawberry. The house of Sebright breakfasted there with me on Monday; the daughter had given me a drawing, and I owed her a civility. Thank you for reminding me of falls; in one sense I am more liable to them than when you left me, for I am sensibly much weaker since my last fit; but that weakness makes me move much slower, and depend more on assistance. In a word, there is no care I do not take of myself: my heart is set on installing you at Cliveden; and it will not be my fault if I do not preserve myself till then. If another summer is added, it will be happiness indeed; but I am not presumptuous, and count the days only till November. I am glad you, on your parts, repose till your journey commences, and go not into sultry crowded lodgings at the Ascension. I was at Venice in summer, and thought airing on stinking ditches pestilential, after enjoying the delicious nights on the Ponte di Trinità at Florence, in a linen night-gown and a straw hat, with improvisatori, and music, and the coffee-houses open with ices—at least, such were the customs fifty years ago!

The Duke of St. Albans has cut down all the brave old trees at Hanworth, and consequently reduced his park to what it issued from —Hounslow-heath: nay, he has hired a meadow next to mine, for the benefit of embarkation; and there lie all the good old corpses of oaks, ashes, and chesnuts directly before *your* windows, and blocking up one of my views of the river! but so impetuous is the rage for building, that his Grace's timber will, I trust, not annoy us long. There will soon be one street from London to Brentford; ay, and from London to every village ten miles round! Lord Camden has just let ground at Kentish Town for building fourteen hundred houses[1] —nor do I wonder; London is, I am certain, much fuller than ever I saw it. I have twice this spring been going to stop my coach in Piccadilly, to inquire what was the matter, thinking there was a mob—not at all; it was only passengers. Nor is there any complaint of depopulation from the country: Bath shoots out into new crescents, circuses, and squares every year: Birmingham, Manchester, Hull, and Liverpool would serve any King in Europe for a capital,

[1] Since called Camden Town, and now an important portion of modern London.—CUNNINGHAM.

and would make the Empress of Russia's mouth water. Of the war with Catherine Slay-Czar I hear not a breath, and thence conjecture it is dozing into peace.

Mr. Dundas has kissed hands for Secretary of State; and Bishop Barrington, of Salisbury, is transferred to Durham, which he affected not to desire, having large estates by his wife in the south—but from the triple mitre downwards, it is almost always true, what I said some years ago, that "*nolo episcopari* is Latin for *I lie.*" Tell it not in Gath that I say so; for I am to dine to-morrow at the Bishop of London's at Fulham, with Hannah *Bonner*, my *imprimée*. This morning I went with Lysons the Reverend to see Dulwich College, founded in 1619 by Alleyn, a player, which I had never seen in my many days. We were received by a smart divine, *très bien poudré*, and with black satin breeches—but they are giving new wings and red satin breeches to the good old hostel too, and destroying a gallery with a very rich ceiling; and nothing will remain of ancient but the front, and an hundred mouldy portraits, among apostles, sibyls, and Kings of England. On Sunday I shall settle at Strawberry; and then woe betide you on post-days! I cannot make news without straw. The Johnstones are going to Bath, for the healths of both; so Richmond will be my only staple. Adieu, all three.

2547. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, June 14, 1791.

I PITY you! what a dozen or fifteen uninteresting letters are you going to receive! for here I am, unlikely to have anything to tell you worth sending. You had better come back incontinently—but pray do not prophesy any more; you have been the death of our summer, and we are in close mourning for it in coals and ashes. It froze hard last night: I went out for a moment to look at my haymakers, and was starved. The contents of an English June are, hay and ice, orange-flowers and rheumatisms! I am now cowering over the fire. Mrs. Hobart had announced a rural breakfast at Sans-Souci last Saturday; nothing being so pastoral as a fat grandmother in a row of houses on Ham Common. It rained early in the morning: she despatched post-boys, for want of Cupids and zephyrs, to stop the nymphs and shepherds who tend their flocks in Pall Mall and St. James's-street; but half of them missed the couriers and arrived. Mrs. Montagu was more splendid yesterday morning, and breakfasted

seven hundred persons on opening her great room, and the room with the hangings of feathers. The King and Queen had been with her last week. I should like to have heard the orations she had prepared on the occasion. I was neither City-mouse nor Country-mouse. I did dine at Fulham on Saturday with the Bishop of London [Porteus]. Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Garrick, and Hannah More were there; and Dr. Beattie, whom I had never seen. He is quiet, simple, and cheerful, and pleased me. There ends my tale, this instant Tuesday! How shall I fill a couple of pages more by Friday morning! Oh! ye ladies on the Common, and ye uncommon ladies in London, have pity on a poor gazetteer, and supply me with eclogues or royal panegyrics! Moreover—or rather more under—I have had no letter from you these ten days, though the east wind has been as constant as Lord Derby.[1] I say not this in reproach, as you are so kindly punctual; but as it stints me from having a single paragraph to answer. I do not admire specific responses to every article; but they are great resources on a dearth.

Madame de Boufflers is ill of a fever, and the Duchesse de Biron[2] goes next week to Switzerland;—*mais qu'est que cela vous fait?* I must eke out this with a few passages that I think will divert you from the heaviest of all books, Mr. Malone's 'Shakspeare,' in ten thick octavos, with notes, that are an extract of all the opium that is spread through the works of all the bad play-wrights of that age:—mercy on the poor gentleman's patience! Amongst his other indefatigable researches, he has discovered some lists of effects in the custody of the property-man to the Lord Admiral's company of players, in 1598. Of those effects he has given eight pages—you shall be off for a few items; viz. "My Lord Caffe's [Caiaphas's] gerchen [jerkin] and his hoose [hose]; one rocke, one tombe, one Hellemought [Hell-mouth], two stepelles and one chyme of belles, one chaine of dragons, two coffines, one bulle's head, one vylter, one goste's crown, and one frame for the heading of black Jone; one payer of stayers for Fayeton, and bowght a robe for to goo invisabell." The pair of stairs for Phaeton reminds one of Hogarth's Strollers dressing in a barn, where Cupid on a ladder is reaching Apollo's stockings, that are hanging to dry on the clouds; as the steeples do of a story in 'L'Histoire du Théatre François:' Jodelet, who not only wrote plays, but invented

[1] To Miss Farren.—Cunningham.

[2] Amélie de Boufflers, wife of Armand-Louis de Gontaut, Duc de Biron, better known in England by the title of Duc de Lauzun.—Wright.

the decorations, was to exhibit of both before Henry the Third. One scene was to represent a view of the sea, and Jodelet had bespoken two *rochers;* but not having time to rehearse, what did he behold enter on either side of the stage, instead of two *rochers*, but two *clochers!* Who knows but my Lord Admiral bought *them?*

Berkeley Square, Thursday, 16th.

I am come to town for one night, having promised to be at Mrs. Buller's this evening with Mrs. Damer, and I believe your friend, Mrs. Cholmeley, whom I have seen two or three times lately and like much. Three persons have called on me since I came, but have not contributed a tittle of news to my journal. If I hear nothing to-night, this must depart, empty as it is, to-morrow morning, as I shall for Strawberry; I hope without finding a new mortification, as I did last time. Two companies had been to see my house last week; and one of the parties, as vulgar people always see with the ends of their fingers, had broken off the end of my invaluable Eagle's bill, and to conceal their mischief, had pocketed the piece. It is true it had been restored at Rome, and my comfort is, that Mrs. Damer can repair the damage—but did the fools know that? It almost provokes one to shut up one's house, when obliging begets injury!

Friday noon.

This moment I receive your 35th, to which I have nothing to answer, but that I believe Fox and Burke are not very cordial; though I do not know whether there has been any formal reconciliation or not. The Parliament is prorogued; and we shall hear no more of them, I suppose, for some months; nor have I learnt anything new, and am returning to Strawberry, and must finish.

2548. TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, June 23, 1791.

Woe is me! I have not an atom of news to send you, but that the second edition of Mother Hubbard's Tale [Mrs. Hobart's party] was again spoiled on Saturday last by the rain; yet she had an ample assemblage of company from London and the neighbourhood. The late Queen of France, Madame du Barry, was there; and the late Queen of England, Madame d'Albany, was not. The former, they say, is as much altered as her kingdom, and does not retain a

trace of her former powers. I saw her on her throne in the chapel of Versailles; and, though then pleasing in face and person, I thought her *un peu passée*.

What shall I tell you more? that Lord Hawkesbury is added to the Cabinet-Council—*que vous importe?* and that Dr. Robertson has published a 'Disquisition into the Trade of the Ancients with India;' a sensible work—but that will be no news to you till you return. It was a peddling trade in those days. They now and then picked up an elephant's tooth, or a nutmeg, or one pearl, that served Venus for a pair of pendants, when Antony had toasted Cleopatra in a bumper of its fellow; which shows that a couple was imported: but, alack! the Romans were so ignorant, that waiters from the Tres Tabernæ, in St. Apollo's-street, did not carry home sacks of diamonds enough to pave the Capitol—I hate exaggerations, and therefore I do not say, to pave the Appian Way. One author, I think, does say, that the wife of Fabius Pictor, whom he sold to a Proconsul, did present Livia[1] with an ivory bed, inlaid with Indian gold; but, as Dr. Robertson does not mention it, to be sure he does not believe the fact well authenticated.

It is an anxious moment with the poor French here: a strong notion is spread, that the Prince of Condé will soon make some attempt; and the National Assembly, by their pompous blustering, seem to dread it. Perhaps the moment is yet too early, till anarchy is got to a greater head; but as to the duration of the present revolution, I no more expect it, than I do the millennium before Christmas. Had the revolutionists had the sense and moderation of our ancestors, or of the present Poles, they might have delivered and blessed their country; but violence, injustice, and savage cruelty, tutored by inexperienced pedantry, produce offspring exactly resembling their parents, or turn their enemies into similar demons. Barbarity will be copied by revenge.

Lord Fitzwilliam has *flown* to Dublin and back. He returned to Richmond on the fourteenth day from his departure, and the next morning set out for France: no courier can do more. In my last, the description of June for *orange-flowers*, pray read *roses:* the east winds have starved all the former; but the latter, having been settled here before the wars of York and Lancaster, are naturalised to the climate, and reck not whether June arrives in summer or

[1] This alludes to the stories told at the time of an ivory bed, inlaid with gold, having been presented to Queen Charlotte by Mrs. Hastings, the wife of the governor-general of India.—Wright.

winter. They blow by their own old-style almanacs. Madame d'Albany might have found plenty of white ones on her own tenth of June; but, on that very day, she chose to go to see the King in the House of Lords, with the crown on his head, proroguing the Parliament.[1] What an odd rencontre! Was it philosophy or insensibility? I believe it is certain that her husband was in Westminster-hall at the Coronation.

The patriarchess of the Methodists, Lady Huntingdon, is dead. Now she and Whitfield are gone, the sect will probably decline: a second crop of apostles seldom acquire the influence of the founders. To-day's paper declares upon its say-so, that Mr. Fawkener is at hand, with Catherine Slay-Czar's[2] acquiescence to our terms; but I have not entire faith in a precursor on such an occasion, and from Holland too. It looks more like a courier to the stocks; and yet I am in little expectation of a war, as I believe we are boldly determined to remain at peace. And now my pen is quite dry—you are quite sure not from laziness, but from the season of the year, which is very anti-correspondent. Adieu!

2549. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, June 28, 1791, *after dinner.*

Our post, Madam, which only comes in, turns on its heel, and goes out again, made it impossible for me to answer your Ladyship's letter before dinner, especially as I write with difficulty and very

[1] "The Bishop of London," writes Hannah More, "carried me to hear the King make his speech in the House of Lords. As it was quite new to me, I was very well entertained; but the thing that was most amusing was to see, among the ladies, the Princess of Stolberg, Countess of Albany, wife to the Pretender, sitting just at the foot of that throne, which she might once have expected to have mounted; and what diverted the party, when I put them in mind of it, was, that it happened to be the 10th of June, *the Pretender's birth-day.* I have the honour to be very much like her; and this opinion was confirmed yesterday, when we met again." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 343.—Wright. Walpole might have added this to his note about Richard Cromwell and Lord Bathurst.—Cunningham.

[2] Walpole rarely makes mention of Catherine without an allusion to the murder of the Czar Peter. In a letter written to Madame du Deffand, in 1769, he thus indignantly denounces Voltaire's applauses of the Empress:—"Voltaire me fait horreur avec sa Catérine; le beau sujet de badinage que l'assassinat d'un mari, et l'usurpateur de son trône! Il n'est pas mal, dit-il, qu'on ait une faute à réparer: eh! comment réparer un meurtre? Est-ce en retenant des poëtes à ses gages? en payant des historiens mercenaires, et en soudoyant des philosophes ridicules à mille lieues de son pays? Ce sont ces ames viles qui chantent un Auguste, et se taisent sur ses proscriptions."—Wright.

slowly, having such a rheumatism in my right shoulder and arm, that I cannot lift it, scarcely upon the table: I have had a little of it the whole year; and, it being the way in this country to proclaim summer the moment the winter dies (though, perhaps, only dozing), people open their windows and keep them so till ten o'clock at night, pretending to be hot, and, it being my fate to meet with two such refreshing grottoes on Saturday night, I have not been able to move my arm since.

The escape of the King and Queen of France came merely time enough to double the shock of their being retaken. An ocean of pity cannot suffice to lament their miserable condition, of which I yet know no particulars, nor more of their evasion than that it was by a subterraneous passage. Almost all the circumstances, both of their flight and capture, which I heard from the French at Richmond, and they from their ambassador, I now hear, are disbelieved in London, particularly of Monsieur de Bouillé's two battalions having laid down their arms, which, indeed, would be a shocking example! How the tragedy is to end, or begin, it is impossible to guess. The only *data* yet are, that the French are as insolent and cruel when possessed of force, as servile and crouching, and fawning, when slaves. Lord Frederick Cavendish two days ago was reading Barillon's letters from England: he tells somebody that he had been in the city *incog.* to see the Pope burnt on 5th of November; and adds, "not a drop of blood was shed. That would not have been the case at Paris."

One cannot think without horror of what the King and Queen must have felt, from the moment of their being stopped till their reentry into their prison, if they are suffered to arrive there; perhaps to see the last of one another, and of their children! They may have to feel, too, for the faithful assistants of their flight; all who did assist will certainly suffer, and many others, too, for all the real liberty given to France is, that anybody may hang anybody.

I have been very much with the wretched fugitives at Richmond! To them it is perfect despair; besides trembling for their friends at Paris!

To conjecture what will happen, or how, would be foolish; but these new events do not make me believe at all more in the duration of chaos, though they may protract it. I see nothing like system, and full as little, anything like a great man. The very impulse given by the flight and recapture of the King, must add vast fermentation to twenty millions of heads already turned; and much

good may it do anybody who attempts to sober them! They can only be governed yet by indulging their exaltation. When the million are glutted with trampling on, murdering, and insulting their former superiors, they will grow tired of their present leaders, and hundreds will think they can govern as ably: in short, can such a convulsion and so total a change subside into a calm? The more all are intoxicated with a total change, the more any deviation from totality will offend. The King, unhappily for him, has precipitated his own ruin, and probably his family's; but I am far from clear that he has mended the situation of the National Assembly. They will think he has, and will be assuming, and the more power they assume the less they will care to part with it; though at the moment when others were expecting a new Assembly, and hoping to be of it. Pray, Madam, have you hitherto seen any grounds for believing that wisdom is the ruling character of the National Assembly?

I have dipped into speculations, though I protested against them, and I have fatigued my arm before I could stop; but I must now bid you good night, not being able to write a line more.

2550. TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, Tuesday night, July 12, 1791.

I HAD had no letter from you for ten days, I suppose from west winds; but did receive one this morning, which had been three weeks on the road: and a charming one it was. Mr. Batt,—who dined with me yesterday, and stayed till after breakfast to-day,—being here, I read part of it to him; and he was as much delighted as I was with your happy quotation of *incedit Regina.* If I could spare so much room, I might fill this paper with all he said of you both, and with all the friendly kind things he begged me to say to both from him. Last night I read to him certain 'Reminiscences;'[1] and this morning he slipped from me, and walked to Cliveden, and hopes to see it again much more agreeably. I hope so too, and that I shall be with him.

I wish there were not so many fêtes at Florence; they are worse for you both than Italian sultriness: but, if you do go to them, I am glad you have more northern weather. News I have none, but

[1] The 'Reminiscences,' dated 13th January, 1789.—CUNNINGHAM.

that Calonne arrived in London on Sunday: you may be sure I do not know for what. In a word, I have no more opinion of his judgment than of his integrity. Now I must say a syllable about myself; but don't be alarmed! It is not the gout; it is worse: it is the rheumatism which I have had in my shoulder ever since it attended the gout last December. It was almost gone till last Sunday, when, the Bishop of London [Porteus] preaching a charity sermon in our church [Twickenham], whither I very, very seldom venture to hobble, I would go to hear him; both out of civility, and as I am very intimate with him. The church was crammed; and, though it rained, every window was open. However, at night I went to bed; but at two I waked with such exquisite pain in my rheumatic right shoulder, that I think I scarce ever felt greater torture from the gout.

2551. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, July 26, 1791.

Ten months are gone of the longest year that ever was born—a baker's year, for it has thirteen months to the dozen! As our letters are so long interchanging, it is not beginning too early to desire you will think of settling the stages to which I must direct to you in your route. Nay, I don't know whether it is not already too late: I am sure it will be, if I am to stay for an answer to this; but I hope you will have thought on it before you receive this. I am so much recovered as to have been abroad. I cannot say my arm is glib yet; but, if I waited for the total departure of the rheumatism, I might stay at home till the national debt is paid. My fair writing is a proof of my lameness: I labour as if I were engraving; and drop no words, as I do in my ordinary hasty scribbling.

Lady Cecilia tells me, that her nephew, Mr. West,[1] who was with you at Pisa, declares he is in love with you both; so I am not singular. You too may like to hear this, though no novelty to you; but it will not satisfy Mr. Berry, who will be impatient for news from Birmingham: but there are no more, nor any-whence else. There has not been another riot in any of the three kingdoms. The villain Paine came over for the Crown and Anchor;[2] but, finding

[1] The Hon. Septimus West. He died of consumption in October, 1793.—Wright.

[2] The great dinner at the Crown and Anchor tavern [in the Strand], in celebration of the anniversary of the French revolution.—Wright.

that his pamphlet had not set a straw on fire, and that the 14th of July was as little in fashion as the ancient gunpowder-plot, he dined at another tavern with a few quaking conspirators; and probably is returning to Paris, where he is engaged in a controversy with the Abbé Sieyes, about the *plus* or *minus* of the rebellion. The rioters in Worcestershire, whom I mentioned in my last, were not a detachment from Birmingham, but volunteer incendiaries from the capital; who went, *according to the rights of men*, with the mere view of plunder, and threatened gentlemen to burn their houses, if not ransomed. Eleven of these disciples of Paine are in custody; and Mr. Merry, Mrs. Barbauld, and Miss Helen Williams will probably have subjects for elegies. Deborah and Jael, I believe, were invited to the Crown and Anchor, and had let their nails grow accordingly; but, somehow or other, no *poissonnières* were there, and the two prophetesses had no opportunity that day of exercising their talents or talons. Their French allies, cock and hen, have a fairer field open; and the Jacobins, I think, will soon drive the National Assembly to be better royalists than ever they were, in self-defence.

You have indeed surprised me by your account of the strange credulity of poor King Louis's escape *in safety!* In these villages we heard of his flight late in the evening, and, the very next morning, of his being retaken.[1] Much as he, at least the Queen, has suffered, I am persuaded the adventure has hastened general confusion, and will increase the royal party; though perhaps their Majesties, for their personal safeties, had better have awaited the natural progress of anarchy. The enormous deficiencies of money, and the total insubordination of the army, both apparent and uncontradicted, from the reports made to the National Assembly, show what is coming. Into what such a chaos will subside, it would be silly to attempt to guess. Perhaps it is not wiser in the exiles to expect to live to see a re-settlement in their favour. One thing I have for these two years thought probable to arrive—a division, at least, a dismemberment, of France. Despotism could no longer govern so unwieldy a machine; a republic would be still less likely to hold it together. If foreign powers should interfere, they will take care to pay themselves with what is *à leur bienséance;* and that, in reality, would be serving France too. So much for my speculations! and they have never varied. We are so far from intending

[1] The flight of the Royal Family of France to, and return from, Varennes.—Wright.

to new-model our government and dismiss the Royal Family, annihilate the peerage, cashier the hierarchy, and lay open the land to the first occupier, as Dr. Priestly, and Tom Paine, and the Revolution Club humbly proposed, that we are even encouraging the breed of princes. It is generally believed that the Duke of York is going to marry the Princess of Prussia, the King's daughter by his first wife, and his favourite child. I do not affirm it; but many others do.[1]

Thursday night, late.

Lady Di. has told me an extraordinary fact. Catherine Slay-Czar sent for Mr. Fawkener,[2] and desired he will order for her a bust of Charles Fox; and she will place it between Demosthenes and Cicero (pedantry she learnt from her French authors, and which our school-boys would be above using); for his eloquence has saved two great nations from a war—by his opposition to it, *s'entend:* so the peace is no doubt made. She could not have addressed her compliment worse than to Mr. Fawkener, sent by Mr. Pitt, and therefore so addressed; and who, of all men, does not love Mr. Fox: and Mr. Fox, who has no vain-glory, will not care a straw for the flattery, and will understand it too. Good night!

2552. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 8, 1791.

I HAVE frequently been inclined to make Kirgate write a line for me, but reflected that I should only give your Ladyship a little unnecessary concern, when I knew that patience would ere long enable me to write myself. It has delivered me from pain, but has left my arm so lame that I cannot lift it to the top of my head, nor write but slowly and with difficulty. I have made no vow against going to church; it is not so tempting since this last experience as to make it necessary to tie myself up. I have always gone now and then, though of late years rarely, as it was most unpleasant to crawl through a churchyard full of staring footmen and apprentices, clamber a ladder to a hard pew to hear the dullest of all things,

[1] The marriage of the Duke of York with Frederica Charlotte Ulrica Catherine, eldest daughter of the King of Prussia, was solemnised, first in Prussia, on the 29th of September, and again in England, on the 23rd of November, 1791.—WRIGHT.

[2] Mr. Fawkener, son of Sir Everard Fawkener, was one of the principal clerks of the privy council, and had been sent on a secret mission to Russia.—WRIGHT.

a sermon, and croaking and squalling of psalms to a hand-organ by journeymen brewers and charity children. As I am to go soon to church for ever, I do not think it my duty to *try on* my death before hand. The truth is, Madam, I am worn out, and little fit to go anywhere or do anything. I did two months ago begin on the 'Woburn Catalogue,' and out of one hundred articles got through forty; when I shall be able to finish the rest the Lord knows; for I can neither lift nor turn over folios of genealogies, for though I used to know who begat whom, like a chapter in Genesis, my mind is not so triflingly circumstantial now, and I might create scandal backwards two centuries ago.

To Mr. Burke's appeal, I answer, it is well and carefully written; but I think he had better not have wanted it, by accepting Mr. Fox's tender and handsome apology. For my own part, I had rather be entertained by anybody's imprudence than their discretion. If a man will be discreet, why write at all? How much more delightful are Mr. Burke's wit, similes, metaphors, and allusions and eccentricities, than his references to what he said in anno Domini one thousand seven hundred, &c.! I am most pleased with his slashing the French, and Paine, and the Presbytyrants, as Lord Melcombe called the Presbyterians. By the way, I am mighty glad to be mighty sorry for Dr. Priestly, as I am sure he is very sorry that he has no opportunity of being very glad for having occasioned fifty thousand times the mischief that has fallen on his own head; yet he might have saved his house, had he clapped Mr. Merry's Ode on it, that is cold enough to have quenched a volcano, and dull enough to be admired by the French Academy. Yes, Madam, yes, by this time twelvemonth the immortal 14th of July may be buried with Voltaire at St. Genevieve, and the National Assembly too. I am sick of their puerility and pedantry; and yet I think they cannot be such egregious fools as they seem. Their most ridiculous debates must proceed from a kind of *finesse* to keep the people intoxicated with new visions, and to avoid settling anything that by finishing might put an end to their own eighteen livres a day.

The Berrys are not expected before the end of October at soonest, and then, I trust, have no thoughts of coming through France. Your own journey, I hope, Madam, is from no necessity of health. Your invitation would be both most agreeable, and I believe salutary for me; but I want resolution, and fancy I want so many other things, that I equally omit what I like and what would be of use to me. Having lost all manner of activity, I have been forced to

discover, that total indolence is a comfortable succedaneum. Adieu, Madam!—Yours, &c.

2553. TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 17, 1791.

No letter from Florence this post, though I am wishing for one every day! The illness of a friend is bad, but is augmented by distance. Your letters say you are quite recovered; but the farther you are from me, the oftener I want to hear that recovery repeated: and any delay in hearing revives my apprehensions of a return of your fever. I am embarrassed, too, about your plan. It grows near to the time you proposed beginning your journey. I do not write with any view to hastening that, which I trust will entirely depend on the state of your health and strength; but I am impatient to know your intentions: in short, I feel that, from this time to your arrival, my letters will grow very tiresome. I have heard to-day, that Lord and Lady Sheffield, who went to visit Mr. Gibbon at Lausanne, met with great trouble and impertinence at almost every post in France. In Switzerland there is a furious spirit of democracy, or demonocracy. They made great rejoicings on the re-capture of the King of France. Oh! why did you leave England in such a turbulent era! When will you sit down on the quiet banks of the Thames?

Wednesday night.

Since I began my letter, I have received yours of the 2nd, two days later than usual; and a most comfortable one it is. My belief and my faith are now of the same religion. I do believe you quite recovered. You, in the mean time, are talking of my rheumatism—quite an old story. Not that it is gone, though the pain is. The lameness in my shoulder remains, and I am writing on my lap: but the complaint is put upon the establishment; like old servants, that are of no use, fill up the place of those that could do something, and yet still remain in the house.

I know nothing new, public or private, that is worth telling. The Stocks are transported with the pacification with Russia, and do not care for what it has cost to bully the Empress to no purpose; and say, we can afford it. Nor can Paine and Priestly persuade them that France is much happier than we are, by having ruined itself. The poor French here are in hourly expectation of as

rapid a counter-revolution as what happened two years ago. Have you seen the King of Sweden's letter to his minister, enjoining him to look dismal, and to take care not to be knocked on the head for so doing? It deserves to be framed with M. de Bouillé's bravado.

You say you will write me longer letters when you know I am well. Your recovery has quite the contrary effect on me: I could scarce restrain my pen while I had apprehensions about you; now you are well, the goose-quill has not a word to say. One would think it had belonged to a physician. I shall fill my vacuum with some lines that General Conway has sent me, written by I know not whom, on Mrs. Harte, Sir William Hamilton's Pantomime mistress, or wife, who acts all the antique statues in an Indian shawl. I have not seen her yet, so am no judge; but people are mad about her wonderful expression, which I do not conceive; so few antique statues having any expression at all, nor being designed to have it. The Apollo has the symptoms of dignified anger; the Laocoon and his sons, and Niobe and her family, are all expression; and a few more: but what do the Venuses, Floras, Hercules, and a thousand others tell, but the magic art of the sculptor, and their own graces and proportions?

I have been making up some pills of patience, to be taken occasionally, when you have begun your journey, and I do not receive your letters regularly; which may happen when you are on the road. I recommend you to St. James of Compost-*antimony*, to whom St. Luke was an ignorant quack. Adieu!

2554. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 22, 1791.

No, Madam, no, I am not so fractious as to quarrel with the civil things you are pleased to say to me. It is true I never had a taste for being complimented; but I don't know how, I am grown less mealy-eared: I suppose it is natural in old age; when one has lost any talent one may have been supposed to have, one may be fond of being told one retains it. Queen Elizabeth, when shrivelled like a morel, listened with complacency to encomiums on her beauty. I perhaps may soon flatter myself, when I cannot crawl, that I am as nimble as I was above fifty years ago, when Mr. Winnington told me I ran along like a pewet; but as to the *iron-head*, I still protest against it. I have said I have an *iron stomach*, and may say so still;

but never did I, nor can I allow the iron head. I know too well the slight and unconnected ingredients of which it is compounded!

With Mr. Burke's book I do not mean to find fault, but to distinguish between what delights me, and what I only respect. I adore *genius;* to *judgment* I pull off my hat, and make it a formal bow; but as I read only to amuse myself, and not to be informed or convinced, I had rather (for my private pleasure) that in his last pamphlet he had flung the reins on the neck of his boundless imagination, as he did in the first. *Genius* creates enthusiasts or enemies; *judgment* only cold friends; and cold friends will sooner go over to your enemies than to your bigots. As to Mr. Fox, I own I think the tears he shed for having hurt Mr. Burke, were an infinitely nobler peace-offering than a recantation could have been. Who weeps for his friend, feels; who retracts his opinion, may be convinced, or from art or interest may pretend he is convinced; and that recantation may be due to the public, without being due to his friend, as no friendship binds one to *think* exactly like one's friend on general topics; and therefore to shed tears for having disagreed, was a greater sacrifice than retractation: and in that light I admire Mr. Fox's temper more than Mr. Burke's. This is being very impartial; for though with Mr. Fox I admire the destruction of despotism, I agree with Mr. Burke in abhorring the violence, cruelty, injustice, and absurdity of the National Assembly, who have destroyed regal tyranny for a short time, and exercise ten times greater themselves; and I fear have ruined liberty for ages; for what country will venture to purchase a chance of freedom at the price of the ruin that has been brought on France by this outrageous experiment?

I am the more impartial, Madam (which I am not apt to be), as Mr. Burke has bribed me in the most welcome manner by his panegyric on my father; but I must speak as I think and have long thought, at least felt for many years. But I am a very timid politician; and though I detest tyranny, I never should have ventured to act against it at the expense of blood, as I am not clear that I am authorised to put a single man to death for the benefit of others. I am shocked to hear it said that the French Revolution has cost *very little* blood! and even that is false! Sure I am that the electors of the *États* gave them (and who but the whole nation could give?) no authority to shed a drop! If one of our juries should condemn a man to be hanged for what he deserved only to be set in the stocks, would not they commit murder? Have I a right,

and whence, to take away any man's property, and allow myself eighteen livres a day out of it? Had the King of France less lawful right to grant parts of his own domains, than the Assembly have to take away those domains and share part of the income amongst themselves, and call it paying themselves for doing their duty in an Assembly, in which they have violated almost every duty they were sent to perform, and which duty they have protracted beyond the term for which they were sent to perform it? Would my breaking my oath to my king authorise me to force others to break theirs and take contradictory oaths? And did their electors nominate them to impose a code of perjury on the whole nation, or strip men of their property for refusing to be perjured? And all this is called a Revolution in favour of liberty! The system, if it is one, is not a democracy, but a demonocracy, for it will sluice torrents of blood before it is settled, or overturned, which last will probably be its fate. James II. broke his coronation oath and the laws, and would have governed without a parliament. Louis XVI. restored the old constitutional parliaments, called the *États* to mend the constitution, and they have treated him worse than the worst of his predecessors whom they flattered and servilely obeyed! I do not admire Papal government; but when the National Assembly had overturned that usurpation, had they a right (after declaring for universal peace) to seize dominions of the Sovereign of Rome, which never belonged to France, and hang inhabitants of Avignon for not breaking their oaths to that sovereign; if the National Assembly did not order those murders, have they punished them or made any reparation to the families of the massacred? At least they did not take eighteen livres a day for doing justice!

P.S. As I do not know whether your Ladyship is set out for Eastbourne, or how to direct, if you are; I send this to Ampthill; it will always reach you time enough, for such commonplace requires no answer, nor deserves any; but I know nothing newer, and perhaps have said the same things before. Our own Revolution, and that in Poland, show that a country may be saved and a very bad government corrected, by wise and good men, without turning *the rights of men* into general injustice and ruin.

2nd P.S. I wrote this letter yesterday after dinner, to be ready for our early post to-day; and then went to the Duke of Queensberry's at Richmond, where were our French exiles, Madame du

Barry, and some of the foreign ministers, and there I heard the following horrible demonocratic story, which came yesterday morning in a letter to George Pitt, from his mother, Lady Rivers, at Lyons, and for which I don't wonder she has determined to quit her house there and return to England. A young gentleman, who visited her, was seized by the demons, I do not know for what offence or suspicion, and was tied to a spit and roasted alive; nor was that all! They brought his mother to see that dreadful sight, and whipped her till she expired before he did. I would not relate such an incredible massacre without quoting my authority. If French kings have been tyrants, what are French people?

2555. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Berkeley Square, Tuesday, Aug. 23, 1791.

I AM come to town to meet Mr. Conway and Lady Aylesbury; and, as I have no letter from you yet to answer, I will tell you how agreeably I have passed the last three days; though they might have been improved had you shared them, as I wished, and as I *sometimes* do wish. On Saturday evening I was at the Duke of Queensberry's (at Richmond, *s'entend*) with a small company: and there were Sir William Hamilton and Mrs. Harte; who, on the 3rd of next month, previous to their departure, is to be made Madame l'Envoyée à Naples, the Neapolitan Queen having promised to receive her in that quality. Here she cannot be presented, where only such over-virtuous wives as the Duchess of Kingston and Mrs. Hastings —who could go with a husband in each hand—are admitted. Why the Margravine of Anspach, with the same pretensions, was not, I do not understand; perhaps she did not attempt it. But I forget to retract, and make *amende honorable* to Mrs. Harte. I had only heard of her attitudes; and those, in dumb show, I have not yet seen. Oh! but she sings admirably; has a very fine, strong voice; is an excellent buffa, and an astonishing tragedian. She sung Nina in the highest perfection; and there her attitudes were a whole theatre of grace and various expressions.

The next evening I was again at Queensberry-house, where the Comtesse Emilie de Boufflers played on her harp, and the Princesse di Castelcigala, the Neapolitan minister's wife, danced one of her country dances, with castanets, very prettily, with her husband. Madame du Barry was there too, and I had a good deal of frank

conversation with her about Monsieur de Choiseul; having been at Paris at the end of his reign and the beginning of hers, and of which I knew so much by my intimacy with the Duchesse de Choiseul.

On Monday was the boat-race [at Richmond]. I was in the great room at the Castle, with the Duke of Clarence, Lady Di., Lord Robert Spencer,[1] and the House of Bouverie,[2] to see the boats start from the bridge to Thistleworth, and back to a tent erected on Lord Dysart's meadow, just before Lady Di.'s windows; whither we went to see them arrive, and where we had breakfast. For the second heat, I sat in my coach on the bridge; and did not stay for the third. The day had been coined on purpose, with my favourite south-east wind. The scene, both up the river and down, was what only Richmond upon earth can exhibit. The crowds on those green velvet meadows and on the shores, the yachts, barges, pleasure and small boats, and the windows and gardens lined with spectators, were so delightful, that when I came home from that vivid show, I thought Strawberry looked as dull and solitary as a hermitage. At night there was a ball at the Castle, and illuminations, with the Duke's cypher, &c. in coloured lamps, as were the houses of his Royal Highness's tradesmen. I went again in the evening to the French ladies on the Green, where there was a bonfire; but, you may believe, not to the ball.

Well! but you, who have had a fever with *fêtes*, had rather hear the history of the new *soi-disante* Margravine. She has been in England with her foolish Prince, and not only notified their marriage to the Earl [of Berkeley] her brother, who did not receive it propitiously, but his Highness informed his Lordship by a letter, that they have an usage in his country of taking a wife with the left hand; that he had espoused his Lordship's sister in that manner; and intends, as soon as she shall be a widow,[3] to marry her with his right hand also. The Earl replied, that he knew she was married to an English peer [Lord Craven], a most respectable man, and can know nothing of her marrying any other man; and so they are gone to Lisbon. Adieu!

[1] Brother to Lady Diana Beauclerk.—Wright.

[2] The family of the Hon. Edward Bouverie, brother to the Earl of Radnor.—Wright.

[3] Lord Craven died 26th Sept. 1791, and his widow, the *soi-disante* Margravine, married the Margrave at Lisbon on the 30th of October of the same year. Wright. They were married by the Rev. Mr. Hill, Southey's uncle. She died in 1828.—Cunningham.

2556. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 8, 1791.

You stroke me with so caressing a hand, Madam, that I repent having yielded to undertake the Catalogue, for I now see that you expect something from it, and I am clear that it must disappoint you. Besides, I have been looking into Mr. Pennant's account, and find my notes were unnecessary, he having anticipated some of the same anecdotes that I have added, and which I believe he had from me several years ago, when he talked to me of a journey to Woburn, or, at least, which he could find too, where I found them. Indeed, with his usual hurry and unacquaintance with ancientry, he has made some blunders, with which I do not wish to charge myself. He ascribes the church of Covent Garden to the second duke, whom he takes for the first, and even then would not be right, for I conclude Earl Francis, who died in 1641, was the builder,[1] as the church was probably not erected after the Civil War began. I am quite innocent too, I assure you, Madam, of calling Philip and Mary an *insipid* pair; nor had Mr. Pennant informed me that he proposed to give an account of the wild beasts in the Tower, should I have prompted him to remark, that a tiger and a hyæna are a couple of pretty playful animals. Still I think his list would have sufficed; and, had I turned to it before I had finished mine (as I did to look for Count Nassau, on whom I have got no information), I certainly should have excused myself. I had exhausted in the 'Royal and Noble Authors' what I had to say on some of the most entertaining characters, and on those I could not touch again. In short, your Ladyship has drawn me into a little scrape, and disappointment will be your reward, for you will find but a very poor performance. It is ready, such as it is, and shall be sent to you whither you please, and by what conveyance you shall direct; but, for mercy's sake, do not let the Duke of Bedford suppose he owes me any thanks; he might as well think himself obliged to his frame-maker for cleaning a few old frames of some of his family pictures, and writing their names in a modern hand. Even his Grace's housekeeper will acquire no new erudition from me; and can you really expect any entertainment from a starved vocabulary of names, for which I have done

[1] Walpole is right. The church was consecrated 27th Sept., 1638.—CUNNINGHAM.

little more than transcribe the Catalogue itself, and some facts in the Duke's genealogy in the 'Peerage?' My precursor, Pennant, may have tripped, but he is much more lively.

I don't know that I am glad, Madam, of Mr. Fitzpatrick's taking to botany. Though I dare to say that he is more entertaining from the cedar to the hyssop than Linnæan Solomon himself (who, though he wrote as high-seasoned verses as Mr. Fitzpatrick, yet had not so much wit), yet I do not know that I shall be the better for his lectures; and who wishes a poet to amuse himself without wishing to be amused by him? Mr. Gray[1] often vexed me by finding him heaping notes on an interleaved 'Linnæus,' instead of pranking on his lyre. Dr. Darwin, indeed, the sublime, the divine, has poured all the powers of poetry into the flower-garden, and as he has immortalised all the intrigues of the lady-plants, who have as many gentlemen of the bed-chamber (by herbalists called *Husbands*) as the northern empress; why should not Mr. Fitzpatrick versify the amours of trees who are as busy with the two genders as we Christians? I only suggest this, not that I am at all a botanist myself; even my passion for flowers lies chiefly in my nose: I care much more for their odours than for their hues or for the anatomy of their pistils.

On France, it is true, Madam, I am silent, and *wait for the echo.* I am no cylinder to draw chaos into a regular figure. No God has yet said, *Let there be light!* A pack of pedants are going to be replaced by a pack of cobblers and tinkers, and confusion will be worse confounded. I should understand the Revelation, or guess the number of the beast, as soon as conjecture what is to ensue in that country. Till anarchy has been blooded down to a *caput mortuum,* there can be no settlement, for all will be struggling different ways, when all ideas have been disjointed and overturned; no great bodies can find their account, and no harmonious system is formed that will be for the interest either of the whole or of individuals. Even they who would wish to support what they now call a constitution, will be perpetually counteracting it, as they will be endeavouring to protract their own power, or to augment their own fortunes—probably both; and since a latitude has been thrown open to every man's separate ideas, can one conceive that unity or union can arise out of such a mass of discord? But it is idle to pretend to foresee what I shall not live to see; besides, foresight guesses

[1] See to Mason, Feb. 18, 1775, vol. vi. p. 191.—Cunningham.

backwards from what has happened, not forwards, futurity *sans* inspiration giving prophets no ground to stand on. All France is turned into legislators; no ordinance is obeyed but that of the *lanterne*, and that supreme will forbids any redress for any injury. Unwilling as I am to prognosticate, can one help asking how long such a dispensation can endure?—Could it last, it must reduce the country to a desert, or to a worse state of barbarism than can be supposed ever to have existed, even if the globe was peopled progressively. The earliest bodies of savages were too much occupied by their daily wants not to attempt mending their condition by degrees, and saw no neighbours in a situation to be envied or to be worth invading. Four-and-twenty millions of civilised people suddenly converted into savages, know what they envied, coveted—and accordingly have levelled everything they could, not to keep anything on a level, but first to exercise power, and then to engross what each man's secret heart told him, at least made him hope would be the consequence of enjoying power. One instance will serve for thousands,—Monsieur Condorcet, Dr. Priestley's consolatory correspondent, has got a place in the Treasury, of 1000*l.* a year.—Adieu, Madam; I doubt I have not been so silent on France as I announced!

P.S. The Berrys are set out on their return, and I hope will be in England by the middle of next month.

On the Blandford match, Madam, I shall certainly not be diffuse, being perfectly indifferent about two young persons whom I never saw, and with whom I have no connection: yet it has made much buzz among many, who have no more to do with it than I have, and who consequently if they pleased might care as little.

2557. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 11, 1791.

Though I am delighted to know, that of thirteen doleful months but two remain, yet how full of anxiety will they be! You set out in still hot weather, and will taste very cold before you arrive! Accidents, inns, roads, mountains, and the sea, are all in my map!—but I hope no slopes to be run down, no *fêtes* for a new Grand Duke. I should dread your meeting armies, if I had much faith in the counter-revolution said to be on the anvil. The French

ladies in my *vicinage* (a word of the late Lord Chatham's coin) are all hen-a-hoop on the expectation of a grand alliance formed for that purpose, and I believe think they shall be at Paris before you are in England; but I trust one is more certain than the other. That folly and confusion increase in France every hour, I have no doubt, and absurdity and contradictions as rapidly. Their constitution, which they had voted should be immortal and unchangeable,—though they deny that any thing antecedent to themselves ought to have been so,—they are now of opinion must be revised at the commencement of next century; and they are agitating a third constitution, before they have thought of a second, or finished the first! Bravo! In short, Louis Onze could not have laid deeper foundations for despotism than these levellers, who have rendered the name of liberty odious—the surest way of destroying the dear essence!

I have no news for you, but a sudden match patched up for Lord Blandford, with a little more art than was employed by the fair Gunnilda. It is with Lady Susan Stewart, Lord Galloway's daughter, contrived by and at the house of her relation and Lord Blandford's friend, Sir Henry Dashwood; and it is to be so instantly, that her Grace, his mother, will scarce have time to forbid the bans.

We have got a codicil to summer, that is as delightful as, I believe, the seasons in the Fortunate Islands. It is pity it lasts but till seven in the evening, and then one remains with a black chimney for five hours. I wish the sun was not so fashionable as never to come into the country till autumn and the shooting season; as if Niobe's children were not hatched and fledged before the first of September. *Apropos*, Sir William Hamilton has actually married his Gallery of Statues,[1] and they are set out on their return to Naples I am sorry I did not see her attitudes, which Lady Di. (a tolerable judge!) prefers to anything she ever saw: still I do not much care I have at this moment a commercial treaty with Italy, and hope in two months to be a greater gainer by the exchange; and I shall not be so generous as Sir William, and exhibit my wives in pantomime to the public. 'Tis well I am to have the originals again; for that wicked swindler, Miss Foldson, has not yet given up their portraits.

The newspapers are obliged to live upon the diary of the King's motions at Weymouth. Oh! I had forgot. Lord Cornwallis has taken Bangalore by storm, promises Seringapatam, and Tippoo Saib has sued for peace. Diamonds will be as plenty as potatoes, and

[1] Emma Harte was married to Sir William Hamilton in the church of St. George's, Hanover-square, on the 6th Sept., 1791.—CUNNINGHAM.

gold is as common as copper-money in Sweden. I was told last night, that a Director of the Bank affirms, that two millions five hundred thousand pounds in specie have already been remitted or brought over hither from France since their revolution.

2558. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Friday night late, Sept. 16, 1791.

As I am constantly thinking of you two, I am as constantly writing to you, when I have a vacant quarter of an hour. Yesterday was red-lettered in the almanacs of Strawberry and Cliveden, supposing you set out towards them, as you intended; the sun shone all day, and the moon at night, and all nature, for three miles round, looked gay. Indeed, we have had nine or ten days of such warmth and serenity, (here called *heat*,) as I scarce remember when the year begins to have grey, or rather yellow hairs. All windows have been flung up again and fans ventilated; and it is true that hay-carts have been transporting hay-cocks, from a second crop, all the morning from Sir Francis Basset's island[1] opposite to my windows. The setting sun and the long autumnal shades enriched the landscape to a Claude Lorrain. Guess whether I hoped to see such a scene next year: if I do not, may you! at least, it will make you talk of me! The gorgeous season and poor partridges, I hear, have emptied London entirely, and yet Drury-lane is removed to the Opera-house. Do you know that Mrs. Jordan is acknowledged to be Mrs. Ford,[2] and Miss Brunton[3] Mrs. Merry, but neither quits the stage? The latter's captain, I think, might quit his poetic profession, without any loss to the public. My gazettes will have kept you so much *au courant*, that you will be as ready for any conversation at your return, as if you had only been at a watering-place. In short, *à votre intention*, and to make my letters as welcome as I can, I listen to and bring home a thousand things, which otherwise I should not know I heard.

Lord Buchan is screwing out a little ephemeral fame from insti-

[1] Sir Francis Basset was living at this time in the house at Twickenham, built by the last Earl of Radnor of the Robarts family.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] Dora Bland—better known as Mrs. Jordan—born at Waterford in 1762, died in France in great distress in 1816.—CUNNINGHAM.

[3] An actress of considerable talent and personal attractions. Her sister [Louisa, daughter of John Brunton, Esq.], also a popular actress, was married, in 1807, to the Earl of Craven [died 1825].—WRIGHT.

tuting a jubilee for Thomson.[1] I fear I shall not make my court to Mr. Berry, by owning I would not give this last week's fine weather for all the four Seasons in blank verse. There is more nature in six lines of L'Allegro and Penseroso, than in all the laboured imitations of Milton. What is there in Thomson of original?

Berkeley Square, Monday night, 19th.

You have alarmed me exceedingly, by talking of returning through France, against which I thought myself quite secure, or I should not have pressed you to stir, yet. I have been making all the inquiries I could amongst the foreign ministers at Richmond, and I cannot find any belief of the march of armies towards France. Nay, the Comte d'Artois is said to be gone to Petersburg; and he must bring back forces in a balloon, if he can be time enough to interrupt your passage through Flanders. One thing I must premise, if, which I deprecate, you should set foot in France; I beg you to burn, and not bring a scrap of paper with you. Mere travelling ladies, as young as you, I know have been stopped and rifled, and detained in France to have their papers examined: and one was rudely treated, because the name of a French lady of her acquaintance was mentioned in a private letter to her, though in no political light. Calais is one of the worst places you can pass; for, as they suspect money being remitted through that town to England, the search and delays there are extremely strict and rigorous. The pleasure of seeing you sooner would be bought infinitely too dear by your meeting with any disturbance; as my impatience for your setting out is already severely punished by the fright you have given me. One charge I can wipe off; but it were the least of my faults. I never thought of your settling at Cliveden in November, if your house in town is free. All my wish was, that you would come for a night to Strawberry, and that the next day I might put you in possession of Cliveden. I did not think of engrossing you from all your friends, who must wish to embrace you at your return.

Tuesday.

I am told that on the King's acceptance of the constitution, there is a general amnesty published, and passports taken off. If this is true, the passage through France, for mere foreigners and strangers, may be easier and safer; but be assured, of all, I would not em-

[1] A poorer and sillier jubilee than Garrick's, though it produced a pleasing poem from Burns.—CUNNINGHAM.

barrass your journey unnecessarily; but, for Heaven's sake! be well informed. I advise nothing; I dread everything where your safeties are in question, and I hope Mr. Berry is as timorous as I am. My very contradictions prove the anxiety of my mind, or I should not torment those I love so much; but how not love those who sacrifice so much for me, and who, I hope, forgive all my unreasonable inconsistencies. Adieu! adieu!

2559. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 25, 1791.

How I love to see my numeros increase.[1] I trust they will not reach sixty! In short, I try every nostrum to make absence seem shorter; and yet, with all my conjuration, I doubt the next five or six weeks will, like the harvest-moon, appear of a greater magnitude than all the moons of the year, its predecessors. I wish its successor, the hunter's-moon, could seem less in proportion; but, on the contrary! I hate travelling, and roads, and inns myself: while you are on your way, I shall fancy, like Don Quixote, that every inn is the castle of some necromancer, and every windmill a giant; and these will be my smallest terrors.

Whether this will meet or follow you, I know not. Yours of the 5th of this month arrived yesterday, but could not direct me beyond Basle. I must, then, remain still in ignorance whether you will take the German or French route. It is now, I think, certain that there will no attempt against France be made this year. Still I trust that you will not decide till you are assured that you may come through France without trouble or molestation; and I still prefer Germany, though it will protract your absence.

I am sorry you were disappointed of going to Valombroso. Milton has made everybody wish to have seen it; which is my wish, for though I was thirteen months at Florence (at twice), I never did see it. In fact, I was so tired of *seeing* when I was abroad, that I have several of these pieces of repentance on my conscience, when they come into my head; and yet I saw too much, for the quantity left such a confusion in my head, that I do not remember a quarter clearly. Pictures, statues, and buildings were always so much my passion, that, for the time, I surfeited myself; especially,

[1] Mr. Walpole numbered all the letters written by him to the Miss Berrys during their residence abroad.—Wright.

as one is carried to see a vast deal that is not worth seeing. They who are industrious and correct, and wish to forget nothing, should go to Greece, where there is nothing left to be seen, but that ugly pigeon-house, the Temple of the Winds, that fly-cage, Demosthenes's lanthorn, and one or two fragments of a portico, or a piece of a column crushed into a mud wall; and with such a morsel, and many quotations, a true classic antiquary can compose a whole folio, and call it Ionian Antiquities![1] Such gentry do better still when they journey to Egypt to visit the Pyramids, which are of a form which one would think nobody could conceive without seeing, though their form is all that is to be seen; for it seems that even prints and measures do not help one to an idea of magnitude: indeed, measures do not; for no two travellers have agreed on the measures. In that scientific country, too, you may guess that such or such a vanished city stood within five or ten miles of such a parcel of land; and when you have conjectured in vain, at what some rude birds, or rounds or squares, on a piece of an old stone may have signified, you may amuse your readers with an account of the rise of the Nile, some feats of the Mamelukes, and finish your work with doleful tales of the robberies of the wild Arabs. One benefit does arise from travelling: it cures one of liking what is worth seeing; especially if what you have seen is bigger than what you do see. Thus, Mr. Gilpin, having visited all the Lakes, could find no beauty in Richmond Hill. If he would look through Mr. Herschel's telescope at the profusion of worlds beyond worlds, perhaps he would find out that Mount Atlas is but an ant-hill; and that the *sublime and beautiful* may exist separately.

2560. TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 27, 1791.

Your letter was most welcome, as yours always are; and I answer it immediately, though our post comes in so late that this will not go away till to-morrow. Nay, I write, though I shall see you on Sunday, and have not a tittle to tell you. I lead so insipid a life, that, though I am content with it, it can furnish me with nothing but repetitions. I scarce ever stir from home in a morning; and

[1] The first volume of 'Ionian Antiquities,' in imperial folio, edited by R. Chandler, N. Revett, and W. Pais, was published in 1769; a second, edited by the Society of Dilettanti, appeared in 1797.—Wright.

most evenings go and play at loto with the French at Richmond, where I am heartily tired of hearing of nothing but their absurd countrymen,—absurd, both democrates and aristocrates. Calonne sends them gross lies, that raise their hopes to the skies: and in two days they hear of nothing but horrors and disappointments; and then, poor souls! they are in despair. I can say nothing to comfort them, but what I firmly believe, which is, that total anarchy must come on rapidly. Nobody pays the taxes that are laid; and which, intended to produce eighty millions a month, do not bring in six. The new Assembly will fall on the old,[1] probably plunder the richest, and certainly disapprove of much they have done; for can eight hundred new ignorants approve of what has been done by twelve hundred almost as ignorant, and who were far from half agreeing? And then their immortal constitution (which, besides, is to be mightily mended nine years hence) will die before it has cut any of its teeth but its grinders. The exiles are enraged at their poor King for saving his own life by a forced acceptance:[2] and yet I know no obligation he has to his noblesse, who all ran away to save their own lives; not a gentleman, but the two poor gendarmes at Versailles, having lost their lives in his defence. I suppose La Fayette, Barnave,[3] the Lameths, &c. will run away, too,[4] when the new tinkers and cobblers, of whom the present elect are and will be composed, proceed on the levelling system taught them by their predecessors, who, like other levellers, have taken good care of themselves. Good Dr. Priestley's friend, good Monsieur Condorcet, has got a place in the Treasury of one thousand pounds a year:—*ex uno disce omnes!* And thus a set of rascals, who might, with temper and discretion, have obtained a very wholesome constitution, witness Poland! have committed infinite mischief, infinite cruelty, infinite injustice, and left a shocking precedent against liberty,

[1] The Constituent Assembly closed its sittings on the 30th of September: having, during the three years of its existence, enacted thirteen hundred laws and decrees, relative to legislation, or to the general administration of the state. The first sitting of the Legislative Assembly took place on the following day.—Wright.

[2] The King, on the 14th of September, had accepted the new constitution, and sworn to maintain it.—Wright.

[3] For expressing his opinion, that the new constitution inclined too much to a democracy, Barnave, after fifteen months' imprisonment at Grenoble, was tried before the revolutionary tribunal, condemned to death, and guillotined on the 29th of November, 1793.—Wright.

[4] The two Lameths, Charles and Alexander, fled the country. The latter, having fallen into the hands of the Austrians with La Fayette, shared his captivity till December, 1795.—Wright.

unless the Poles are as much admired and imitated as the French ought to be detested.

I do not believe the Emperor will stir yet; he, or his ministers, must see that it is the interest of Germany to let France destroy itself. His interference yet might unite and consolidate, at least check further confusion: and though I rather think that twenty thousand men might march from one end of France to the other, as, though the officers often rallied, French soldiers never were stout; yet, having no officers, no discipline, no subordination, little resistance might be expected. Yet the enthusiasm that has been spread might turn into courage. Still it were better for Cæsar to wait. Quarrels amongst themselves will dissipate enthusiasm; and, if they have no foreign enemy, they will soon have spirit enough to turn their swords against one another, and what enthusiasm remains will soon be converted into the inveteracy of faction. This is speculation, not prophecy; I do not pretend to guess what will happen: I do think I know what will not; I mean, the system of experiments that they call a constitution cannot last. Marvellous indeed would it be, if a set of military noble lads, pedantic academicians, curates of villages, and country advocates, could in two years, amidst the utmost confusion and altercation amongst themselves, dictated to or thwarted by obstinate clubs of various factions, have achieved what the wisdom of all ages and all nations has never been able to compose—a system of government that would set four-and-twenty millions of people free, and contain them within any bounds! This, too, without one great man amongst them. If they had had, as Mirabeau seemed to promise to be, but as we know that he was, too, a consummate villain, there would soon have been an end of their vision of liberty. And so there will be still, unless, after a civil war, they split into small kingdoms or commonwealths. A little nation may be free; for it can be upon its guard. Millions cannot be so; because, the greater number of men that are one people, the more vices, the more abuses there are, that will either require or furnish pretexts for restraints; and if vices are the mother of laws, the execution of laws is the father of power:—and of such parents one knows the progeny.

2561. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

My Dear Madam, *Berkeley Square, Sept.* 29, 1791.

I have been very sorry, but not at all angry, at not hearing from you so long. With all your friendly and benevolent heart, I know by experience how little you love writing to your friends; and I know why: you think you lose moments which you could employ in doing more substantial good; and that your letters only pamper our minds, but do not feed or clothe our bodies: if they did, you would coin as much paper as the French do in *assignats*. Do not imagine now that you have committed a wicked thing by writing to me at last: comfort yourself, that your conscience, not temptation, forced you to write; and be assured, I am as grateful as if you had written from choice, not from duty, your constant spiritual director.

I have been out of order the whole summer, but not very ill for above a fortnight. I caught a painful rheumatism by going into a very crowded church on a rainy day, where all the windows were open, to hear our friend the Bishop of London [Porteus] preach a charity sermon here at Twickenham. My gout would not resign to a new incumbent, but came too; and both together have so lamed my right arm, though I am now using it, that I cannot yet extend it entirely, nor lift it to the top of my head. However, I am free from pain; and as Providence, though it supplied us originally with so many bounties, took care we might shift with succedaneums on the loss of several of them, I am content with what remains of my stock; and since all my fingers are useless, and that I have not six hairs left, I am not much grieved at not being able to comb my head. Nay, should not such a shadow as I have ever been, be thankful, that at the eve of seventy-five I am not yet passed away?

I am so little out of charity with the Bishop for having been the innocent cause of the death of my shoulder, that I am heartily concerned for him and her on Mrs. Porteus's accident.[1] It may have marbled her complexion, but I am persuaded has not altered her lively, amiable, good-humoured countenance. As I know not where to direct to them, and as you cannot suppose it a sin for a sheep to write to its pastor on a week-day, I wish you would mark the interest I take in their accident and escape from worse mischief.

[1] An overturn in a carriage.—Wright.

I thank you most cordially for your inquiry after *my* wives. I am in the utmost perplexity of mind about them; torn between hopes and fears. I believe them set out from Florence on their return since yesterday se'ennight, and consequently feel all the joy and impatience of expecting them in five or six weeks: but then, besides fears of roads, bad inns, accidents, heats and colds, and the sea to cross in November at last, all my satisfaction is dashed by the uncertainty whether they come through Germany or France. I have advised, begged, implored, that it may not be through those Iroquois, Lestryons, Anthropophagi, the Franks; and then, hearing passports were abolished, and the roads more secure, I half consented, as they wished it, and the road is much shorter; and then I repented, and have contradicted myself again. And now I know not which route they will take; nor shall enjoy any comfort from the thoughts of their return, till they are returned safe.

'Tis well I am doubly guaranteed, or who knows, as I am as old almost as both her husbands together, but Mrs. B—— might have cast a longing eye towards me? How I laughed at hearing of her throwing a second muckender to a Methusalem! a fat, red-faced veteran, with a portly hillock of flesh. I conclude all her grandfathers are dead; or, as there is no prohibition in the table of consanguinity against male ancestors, she would certainly have stepped back towards the Deluge, and ransacked her pedigrees on both sides for some kinsman of the patriarchs. I could titter *à plusieurs reprises;* but I am too old to be improper, and you are too modest to be *impropered* to: and so I will drop the subject at the Heralds' Office.

I am happy at and honour Miss Burney's resolution in casting away golden, or rather gilt chains: others, out of vanity, would have worn them till they had eaten into the bone. On that charming young woman's chapter[1] I agree with you perfectly; not a jot

[1] Miss Burney had recently resigned her troublesome office of joint-keeper of the Queen's Robes. Madame D'Arblay (Miss Burney) has entered in her Diary the following portion of a letter addressed to her by Walpole:—

"As this will come to you by my servant, give me leave to add a word on your most unfounded idea that I can forget you, because it is almost impossible for me ever to meet you. Believe me, I heartily regret that privation, but would not repine, were your situation, either in point of fortune or position, equal in any degree to your merit. But were your talents given to be buried in obscurity? You have retired from the world to a closet at Court—where, indeed, you will still discover mankind, though not disclose it; for if you could penetrate its characters, in the earliest glimpse of its superficies, will it escape your piercing eye when it shrinks from your inspection, knowing that you have the mirror of truth in your pocket? I will not embarrass you by saying more, nor would have you take notice of, or reply to what I have said: judge, only, that feeling hearts reflect, not forget. Wishes that are empty look like

on *Deborah* * * * * *, [Mrs. Barbauld?] whom you admire: I have neither read her verses, nor will. As I have not your aspen conscience, I cannot forgive the heart of a woman that is party per pale blood and tenderness, that curses our clergy and feels for negroes. Can I forget the 14th of July, when they all contributed their faggot to the fires that her presbytyrants (as Lord Melcombe called them) tried to light in every Smithfield in the island; and which, as Price and Priestley applauded in France, it would be folly to suppose they did not only wish, but meant to kindle here? Were they ignorant of the atrocious barbarities, injustice, and violation of oaths committed in France? Did Priestley not know that the clergy there had no option but between starving and perjury? And what does he think of the poor man executed at Birmingham, who declared at his death, he had been provoked by the infamous hand-bill? I know not who wrote it. No, my good friend: *Deborah* may cant rhymes of compassion, but she is a hypocrite; and you shall not make me read her, nor, with all your sympathy and candour, can you esteem her. *Your* compassion for the poor blacks is genuine, sincere from your soul, most amiable; hers, a measure of faction. Her party supported the abolition, and regretted the disappointment as a blow to the good cause. I know this. Do not let your piety lead you into the weakness of respecting the bad, only because they hoist the flag of religion, while they carry a stiletto in the flag-staff. Did not they, previous to the 14th of July, endeavour to corrupt the guards? What would have ensued, had they succeeded, you must tremble to think!

You tell me nothing of your own health. May I flatter myself it is good? I wish I knew so authentically! and I wish I could guess when I should see you, without your being staked to the fogs of the Thames at Christmas; I cannot desire that. Adieu, my very valuable friend! I am, though unworthy, yours most cordially.

2562. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 30, 1791.

I HAVE been ashamed to write to your Ladyship till I could tell

vanity; my vanity is to be thought capable of esteeming you as much as you deserve, and to be reckoned, though a very distant, a most *sincere* friend,—and give me leave to say, dear Madam, your most obedient humble servant, HOR. WALPOLE.
Strawberry Hill, October '90.
—CUNNINGHAM.

you that I have finished the notes to the Duke of Bedford's pictures; I stayed at home all yesterday evening to make an end; but alas! Madam, though I have been so tedious, if your partiality for me has raised any expectation of amusement in the Duke, his Grace will be piteously disappointed; of which I warned your Ladyship before I undertook the task, in the execution of which I have no kind of merit but obedience. Age has not left me even the ardour of a genealogist, though it requires nothing but perseverance, and rheumatism cripples even that. Well, I will say no more of my tasks and my defects. Another damper was that some of the portraits are of persons so well known that it would have been tautology to dwell on them; and others so forgotten that I have been able to find no memorials of them. Of none of them are the painters named. I remember two curious pictures (but know not which they are in this list, as there are several duplicates of the same persons), which the first time I was at Woburn the Duchess of Bedford told me were two sons[1] of the second Earl [died 1585], and that from their story the subject of 'The Orphan' was taken. They were two young men, less than life, I think, with emblems, and in one of the pictures was a lady in a maze. Did you ever hear of that anecdote, Madam, and can you tell me more of it?

Well! I said I had done my work, and now I will have it transcribed fair and transmit it to your Ladyship; but you must not expect it incontinently, for poor Kirgate is shaking in bed with an ague and fever, and nobody else can read my sketches, when I am putting together things of this sort with twenty books on the table, and abbreviate words so, that they are rather memorandums than sentences, and sometimes I have difficulty to make them out myself.

Not knowing whether you are at Ampthill or Farming-Woods, I direct to the former as the more secure conveyance, and having satisfied my conscience by declaring my task done, it is of no consequence if you do not receive my notification this week.

I have seen Arundel Castle, which your Ladyship mentioned in your last. It is a nothing on a fine hill. The old duke [of Norfolk] told me the castle had been *haunted* by a giant, and did not know that that giant was Oliver Cromwell!

I have scarce a newer anecdote to send you, Madam, but that *old* Q. [Queensberry] presented Madame du Barry to the King on the

[1] Edward the eldest, and Francis the third son. Pennant tells the story in his Journey from Chester to London.'—CUNNINGHAM.

terrace at Windsor, and the King of England did not turn the same side that the late King of France used to turn to her, but the reverse, as he told Lord Onslow himself. It was a strange oblivion of etiquette in an *ancien gentilhomme de la chambre*, and more so in one dismissed!

I have to the last drop of my pen been your Ladyship's most obedient, but, indeed, now can only be your most humble servant.

2563. TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 9, 1791.

It will be a year to-morrow since you set out: next morning came the storm that gave me such a panic for you! In March happened your fall, and the wound on your nose; and in July your fever. For sweet Agnes I have happily had no separate alarm: yet I have still a month of apprehension to come for both! All this mass of vexation and fears is to be compensated by the transport at your return, and by the complete satisfaction on your installation at Cliveden. But could I believe, that when my clock had struck seventy-four, I could pass a year in such agitation! It may be taken for dotage; and I have for some time expected to be superannuated: but, though I task myself severely, I do not find my intellects impaired; though I may be a bad judge myself. You may, perhaps, perceive it by my letters; and don't imagine I am laying a snare for flattery. No! I am only jealous about myself, that you two may have created such an attachment, without owing it to my weakness. Nay, I have some colt's limbs left, which I as little suspected as my anxieties.

I went with General Conway, on Wednesday morning, from Park-place to visit one of my ante-diluvian passions,—not a Statira or Roxana, but one pre-existent to myself,—one Windsor Castle; and I was so delighted and so juvenile, that, without attending to anything but my eyes, I stood full two hours and a half, and found that half my lameness consists in my indolence. Two Berrys, a Gothic chapel, and an historic castle, are anodynes to a torpid mind. I now fancy that old age was invented by the lazy. St. George's Chapel, that I always worshipped, though so dark and black that I could see nothing distinctly, is now being cleaned and decorated, a scene of lightness and graces. Mr. Conway was so struck with its Gothic beauties and taste, that he owned the Grecian style would not admit half the variety of its imagination. There is a new screen

prefixed to the choir, so airy and harmonious, that I concluded it Wyatt's; but it is by a Windsor architect, whose name I forget. Jarvis's window, over the altar, after West, is rather too sombre for the Resurrection, though it accords with the tone of the choirs; but the Christ is a poor figure, scrambling to heaven in a fright, as if in dread of being again buried alive, and not ascending calmly in secure dignity: and there is a Judas below, so gigantic, that he seems more likely to burst by his bulk, than through guilt. In the midst of all this solemnity, in a small angle over the lower stalls, is crammed a small bas-relief, in oak, with the story of Margaret Nicholson, the King, and the Coachman, as ridiculously added, and as clumsily executed, as if it were a monkish miracle. Some loyal zealot has broken away the blade of the knife, as if the sacred wooden personage would have been in danger still. The Castle itself is smugged up, is better glazed, has got some new stools, clocks, and looking-glasses, much embroidery in silk, and a gaudy, clumsy throne, with a medallion at top of the King's and Queen's heads, over their own—an odd kind of tautology, whenever they sit there! There are several tawdry pictures, by West, of the history of the Garter; but the figures are too small for that majestic place. However, upon the whole, I was glad to see Windsor a little revived.

I had written thus far, waiting for a letter, and happily receive your two from Bologna together; for which I give you a million of thanks, and for the repairs of your coach, which I trust will contribute to your safety: but I will swallow my apprehensions, for I doubt I have tormented you with them. Yet do not wonder, that after a year's absence, my affection, instead of waning, is increased. Can I help feeling the infinite obligation I have to you both, for quitting Italy that you love, to humour Methusalem?—a Methusalem that is neither king nor priest, to reward and bless you; and whom you condescend to please, because he wishes to see you once more; though he ought to have sacrificed a momentary glimpse to your far more durable satisfaction. Instead of generosity, I have teazed, and I fear, wearied you, with lamentations and disquiets; and how can I make you amends? What pleasure, what benefit, can I procure for you in return? The most disinterested generosity, such as yours is, gratifies noble minds; but how paltry am I to hope that the reflections of your own minds will compensate for all the amusements you give up to

Make languor smile, and smooth the bed of death!—[*Pope.*]

I may boast of having no foolish weakness for your persons, as I certainly have not; but

> The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decayed,
> Lets in new *selfishness* through chinks that time has made.[1]

And I have been as avaricious of hoarding a few moments of agreeable society, as if I had coveted a few more trumpery guineas in my strong-box! and then I have the assurance to tell you I am not superannuated! Oh! but I am!

The Bolognese school is my favourite, though I do not like Guercino, whom I call the German Guido, he is so heavy and dark. I do not, like your friend, venerate Constantinopolitan paintings, which are scarce preferable to Indian. The characters of the Italian comedy were certainly adopted even from the persons of its several districts and dialects. Pantaloon is a Venetian, even in his countenance; and I once saw a gentleman of Bergamo, whose face was an exact Harlequin's mask.

I have scarce a pen-ful of news for you; the world is at Weymouth or Newmarket. En attendant, voici the Gunnings again. The old gouty General has carried off his tailor's wife; or rather, she him—whither, I know not. Probably, not far; for the next day the General was arrested for three thousand pounds, and carried to a spunging-house, whence he sent Cupid with a link to a friend, to beg help and a crutch. This amazing folly is generally believed; perhaps because the folly of that race is amazing—so is their whole story. The two beautiful sisters were going on the stage, when they are at once exalted almost as high as they could be, were Countessed and double-Duchessed; and now the rest of the family have dragged themselves through all the kennels of the newspapers! Adieu! forgive all my pouts. I will be perfectly good-humoured when I have nothing to vex me!

2564. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Oct. 26, 1791.

Your Ladyship is very gracious about the catalogue, as I knew you would be, when you had commanded it; but I disclaim all merit but obedience, which, we are told, is better than sacrifice, but which in this case was the same thing, as nobody could have less taste for the task, nor less satisfaction in the execution. There are but two articles at all curious, and those not new; yet, by collecting

[1] Altered from Waller.—Cunningham.

scattered incidents, and putting them together, Christian [Bruce], Countess of Devonshire, appears to me to have been a remarkable personage; and by the same kind of assemblage I was pleased to find, what I had not observed before, that the Lord Russell in the double portrait with Lord Digby,[1] became so long afterwards the first Duke of Bedford, and consequently was concerned in both those memorable periods, the Civil War and the Revolution. Genealogy and pedigrees thus become useful in the study of history, if the study itself of history is useful, which I doubt, considering how little real truth it communicates, and how much falsehood it teaches us to believe. Indeed, considering how very little truth we can glean from the study of anything, I question whether there is any other good in what is called learning, than its enabling us to converse on an equal footing with those who think they possess knowledge, because they have acquainted themselves with the imperfect scraps of what passes for science.

I thank your Ladyship for correcting my blunder about the Queen of Bohemia, which shows how little I have profited by studying genealogy, or that I have lost my memory, which I rather believe the case, as I think in the very same article I have alluded to James I. as that Queen's father, and therefore did know what I forgot the next minute.

My little spurt of gout, I thank you, Madam, is gone, but the inflammation on my arm not quite, and it keeps me still in town; yet I hope to get away in a day or two.

My servant's death[2] was shocking indeed, and incomprehensively out of proportion to his fault, and to the slight notice taken of it; and that gentle treatment is my consolation, as I had in nowise contributed to, nor could foresee nor prevent his sad catastrophe!

Your Ladyship's most devoted, &c.

2565. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Nov. 23, 1791.

Your Ladyship, I am sure, will excuse my silence, when you

[1] The full-length by Vandyck. The original is at Althorp.—Cunningham.

[2] "Mr. Walpole was absurdly blamed for the fate of one servant, a fine but undeserving youth, by those who were ignorant of the circumstances. Fond of dress, the youth repeatedly stole plate and sold or pawned it. Detected, sharply reprehended, and threatened by Colomb [Walpole's Swiss servant], the poor fellow hung himself on a tree in the grove. Mr. Walpole had not the slightest share in the transaction." *Pinkerton* ('Walpoliana,' p. xlviii.)—Cunningham.

hear in what distress I have been from a new fit of frenzy of Lord Orford, attended by total insensibility, and so violent a fever, that from seven o'clock on Friday evening, when Dr. Monro, whom I had sent down to him, returned, I had dreaded an express with an account of his death, till the post came in very late on Monday; nor should I have known a syllable of his disorder and danger, had not Lord Cadogan, who lives in the neighbourhood, sent me word of it; the persons in the house, with Lord Orford and his servants, totally concealing his situation from me, and from both his steward and his lawyer in town, who knew it not but from me; though a mad keeper had been sent for privately to an apothecary in St. Alban's Street. This is a new instance of the treatment I have received in return for and ever since all the torment and trouble I had; and for all the care, attention, and tenderness I twice exerted during his fits of lunacy, and in recovering and restoring him from which I was fortunately rewarded by success. Thank God, I have the comfort of seeing the tranquillity of the end of my days renewed, for the fever is in a manner gone, and his senses so far returned, that I conclude it will again be said, as it has been the fashion to say, "that he is as well as ever he was;" and in *one sense* that may be true!

I beg your pardon, Madam, for this tedious apology, but when so injuriously and disgracefully treated, and still more, with such gross injustice, for if ever I had merit in any part of my life, it has been in my care of Lord Orford, can I be totally silent to those who wish me well? And when I can produce proofs of a long list of such services, pains and acts of the strictest honour and integrity as few uncles or trustees I believe could equal, is it not hard, Madam, to be treated by my Lord's intimates as if I had bad designs, though when twice in my power for months, I alone directed the management and unparalleled tender treatment of him; and to be used by him after both his recoveries as a total stranger and alien, and mocked by an annual present of two boxes of pewet's eggs, with a line and a half *in his own hand* on a folio sheet, simply notifying the donation? I call them his quit-rents; they are his only acknowledgment of my existence. But I have done, and will tire your Ladyship no more on that subject, which, for my own peace, too, I will forget as much as I can.

The Duke of Bedford is too gracious, Madam, in being pleased to say he is content with my meagre account of his pictures, which do not deserve the honour of a visit from his Grace; but may I say he would oblige me by lending me for a very few days the small

portrait of Christian, Countess of Devonshire, which shall be returned carefully without delay. A friend of mine, Mr. Lysons,[1] a clergyman, is writing a history of the villages for ten [twelve] miles round London, with an account of the churches, monuments, chief houses, and remarkable inhabitants that have lived or are buried in each; with some views and plates, two or three of which I shall contribute. Lady Devonshire[2] will be one, if the Duke will allow a drawing to be taken from it, for it shall not be detained for the engraver.

Thank your Ladyship for the verses you inclosed, though I had seen both copies before; the Duke's are the best, for, though not harmonious, they are simple and natural. The other lines are not Lady Spencer's, but her mother's Lady Lucan, who repeated them to me herself some time ago.

Dr. Robertson's book [on India] amused me pretty well, Madam, though very defective from the hiatuses in his materials. It is a genealogy with more than half the middle descents wanting; and thence his ingenious hypothesis of western invaders importing civilisation from the east is not ascertained. Can one be sure a peer is descended from a very ancient peer of the same name, though he cannot prove who a dozen of his grandfathers were? Dr. Robertson shone when he wrote the History of his own country, with which he was acquainted. All his other works are collections, tacked together for the purpose; but as he has not the genius, penetration, sagacity, and art of Mr. Gibbon, he cannot melt his materials together, and make them elucidate and even improve and produce new discoveries; in short, he cannot, like Mr. Gibbon, make an *original* picture with some bits of Mosaic. The Doctor, too, has let himself build on that trifling saying of "the cradle of science." I told him so in my answer when he sent me his book, and that if the east were the cradle of science, at least it had never got out of its nursery. It might invent a horn-book; did it ever arrive at a grammar?

I certainly, Madam, am not able to tell you a tittle more of the Duchess of York, than the newspapers tell you and me; nor do I know what truths or lies they tell. I have been entirely shut up with my own family since Lord Orford's illness, receiving and writing letters, &c. I have scarce any other acquaintance in town, and

[1] Reverend Daniel Lysons, Chaplain to the Earl of Orford. The work is inscribed to Walpole.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] Christian Bruce, Countess of Devonshire, died 1674-5. Her portrait from the original at Woburn is engraved in the first volume of 'Lysons' Environs.'—CUNNINGHAM.

have out-lived most of those I had. Nor, though I abhor the French for all their savage barbarities, condemn them for missing so favourable an opportunity of obtaining a good, free, and durable constitution; and despise them for their absurdities, that are both childish and pedantic; I am not grown a whit more in love with princes and princesses than I ever was, nor have any curiosity about them. I do not dislike kings, or nobility, or people, but as human creatures that, when possessed of full power, scarce ever fail to abuse it; and, therefore, each description ought to be chained in some degree, or made counterpoisons to one another, as we, *by an unique concurrence of accidents*, are in this country.

There, Madam! I send you grievances, complaints, criticisms, and opinions, all eccentric perhaps; but I was glad to turn the stream of my thoughts into any new cut, and am more glad to find that I can do it so easily; an earnest of my soon becoming as indifferent to my vexations, as I was before the sore was opened again. Oh! I this moment recollect to tell your Ladyship that Lady Craven received the news of her Lord's death on a Friday, went into weeds on Saturday, and into white satin, and *many* diamonds, on Sunday, and in that vestal trim was married to the Margrave of Anspach by my cousin's chaplain, though he and Mrs. Walpole excused themselves from being present. The bride excused herself for having *so few* diamonds; they had been the late Margravine's, but she is to have many more, and will soon set out for England, where they shall astound the public by living in a style of magnificence unusual, as they are richer than anybody in this country. The Dukes of Bedford, Marlborough, and Northumberland may hide their diminished rays!

2566. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 10, 1791.

Your Ladyship has so long accustomed me to your goodness and partiality, that I am not surprised at your being kind on an occasion that is generally productive of satisfaction. That is not quite the case with me. Years ago, a title would have given me no pleasure, and at any time the management of a landed estate, which I am too ignorant to manage, would have been a burthen. That I am now to possess, should it prove a considerable acquisition to my fortune, which I much doubt, I would not purchase at the rate of

the three weeks of misery which I have suffered, and which made me very ill, though I am now quite recovered. It is a story much too full of circumstances, and too disagreeable to me to be couched in a letter; sometime or other I may perhaps be at leisure and composed enough to relate in general.—At present I have been so overwhelmed with business that I am now writing these few lines as fast I can, to save the post, as none goes to-morrow, and I should be vexed not to thank your Ladyship and Lord Ossory by the first that departs. As, however, I owe it to you and to my poor nephew, I will just say that I am perfectly content. He has given me the whole Norfolk estate, heavily charged, I believe, but that is indifferent. I had reason to think that he had disgraced, by totally omitting me—but unhappy as his intellects often were, and beset as he was by miscreants, he has restored me to my birth-right, and I shall call myself obliged to him, and be grateful to his memory, as I am to your Ladyship, and shall be as I have so long been, your devoted servant, by whatever name I may be forced to call myself.[1]

2567. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Dec. 26, 1791.

Your Ladyship is, as usual, ever kind to me. My mistership, I believe, would have been very well if I could have preserved it, but the Lordship and its train of troubles have half killed me. I have had a week's gout, but it is gone, and so far comforts me, as, had I had much about me, I am sure it would have been produced by all the trouble and fatigue I have undergone; nor have I strength or spirits to combat all I have to come. I have not yet been able to go out of my house to return visits, but as I am never called *My Lora* but I fancy I have got a bunch on my back, I must go and leave my hump at fifty doors.

I have detained your Ladyship's servant from various interruptions and here is the post from Norfolk arrived with letters that I probably must answer directly, or at midnight, when my company is gone. In short, my tranquillity is gone, and my voice almost also; and as Kirgate is grown deafish, it is even less fatigue to write myself than to dictate to him; and all these miseries must excuse the shortness of this.

[1] No signature in the MS.—R. Vernon Smith.

2568. TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 26, 1791.

As I am sure of the sincerity of your congratulations,[1] I feel much obliged by them, though what has happened destroys my tranquillity; and, if what the world reckons advantages could compensate the loss of peace and ease, would ill indemnify me, even by them. A small estate, loaded with debt, and of which I do not understand the management, and am too old to learn; a source of law-suits amongst my near relations, though not affecting me; endless conversations with lawyers, and packets of letters to read every day and answer,—all this weight of new business is too much for the rag of life that yet hangs about me, and was preceded by three weeks of anxiety about my unfortunate nephew, and a daily correspondence with physicians and mad-doctors, falling upon me when I had been out of order ever since July. Such a mass of troubles made me very seriously ill for some days, and has left me and still keeps me so weak and dispirited, that, if I shall not soon be able to get some repose, my poor head or body will not be able to resist. For the empty title, I trust you do not suppose it is anything but an incumbrance, by larding my busy mornings with idle visits of interruption, and which, when I am able to go out, I shall be forced to return. Surely no man of seventy-four, unless superannuated, can have the smallest pleasure in sitting at home in his own room, as I almost always do, and being called by a new name!

It will seem personal, and ungrateful too, to have said so much about my own *triste* situation, and not to have yet thanked you, Sir, for your kind and flattering offer of letting me read what you have finished of your 'History;' but it was necessary to expose my position to you, before I could venture to accept your proposal, when I am so utterly incapable of giving a quarter of an hour at a time to what I know, by my acquaintance with your works, will demand all my attention, if I wish to reap the pleasure they are formed to give me. It is most true that for these seven weeks I have not read seven pages, but letters, states of accounts, cases to be laid before

[1] To the title of fourth Earl of Orford—his father's peerage, doomed to expire with his youngest son, the great letter-writer. Horace's nephew, George, the third and mad earl, who sold the Houghton pictures, died 5th Dec., 1791.—CUNNINGHAM.

lawyers, accounts of farms, &c. &c., and those subject to mortgages. Thus are my mornings occupied: in an evening my relations and a very few friends come to me; and, when they are gone, I have about an hour to midnight to write answers to letters for the next day's post, which I had not time to do in the morning. This is actually my case now. I happened to be quitted at ten o'clock, and would not lose the opportunity of thanking you, not knowing when I could command another hour.

I by no means would be understood to decline your obliging offer, Sir; on the contrary, I accept it joyfully, if you can trust me with your manuscript for a little time, should I have leisure to read it but by small snatches, which would be wronging you, and would break all connection in my head. Criticism you are too great a writer to want; and to read critically is far beyond my present power. Can a scrivener, or a scrivener's hearer, be a judge of composition, style, profound reasoning, and new lights and discoveries, &c.? But my weary hand and breast must finish. May I ask the favour of your calling on me any morning, when you shall happen to come to town? You will find the new-old Lord exactly the same admirer of yours.

2569. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

My much-esteemed Friend, *Berkeley Square, Jan.* 1, 1792.

I have not so long delayed answering your letter from the pitiful revenge of recollecting how long your pen is fetching breath before it replies to mine. Oh! no; you know I love to *heap coals of kindness* on your head, and to draw you into little sins, that you may forgive yourself, by knowing your time was employed on big virtues. On the contrary, you would be revenged; for here have you, according to *your* notions, inveigled me into the fracture of a commandment; for I am writing to you on a Sunday, being the first moment of leisure that I have had since I received your letter. It does not indeed clash with my religious ideas, as I hold paying one's debts as good a deed as praying and reading sermons for a whole day in every week, when it is impossible to fix the attention to one course of thinking for so many hours for fifty-two days in every year. Thus you see I can preach too. But seriously, and indeed I am little disposed to cheerfulness now, I am overwhelmed with troubles, and with business—and business that I do not under-

stand; law, and the management of a ruined estate, are subjects ill-suited to a head that never studied anything that in worldly language is called useful. The tranquillity of my remnant of life will be lost, or so perpetually interrupted, that I expect little comfort; not that I am already intending to grow rich, but, the moment one is supposed so, there are so many alert to turn one to their own account, that I have more letters to write to satisfy, or rather to dissatisfy them, than about my own affairs, though the latter are all confusion. I have such missives, on agriculture, pretensions to livings, offers of taking care of my game as I am incapable of it, self-recommendations of making my robes, and round hints of taking out my writ, that at least I may name a proxy, and give my dormant conscience to somebody or other! I trust you think better of my heart and understanding than to suppose that I have listened to any one of these new *friends*. Yet, though I have negatived all, I have been forced to answer some of them before you; and that will convince you how cruelly ill I have passed my time lately, besides having been made ill with vexation and fatigue. But I am tolerably well again.

For the other empty metamorphosis that has happened to the outward man, you do me justice in concluding that it can do nothing but teaze me; it is being called names in one's old age. I had rather be my Lord Mayor, for then I should keep the nickname but a year; and mine I may retain a little longer, not that at seventy-five I reckon on becoming my Lord Methusalem. Vainer, however, I believe I am already become; for I have wasted almost two pages about myself, and said not a tittle about your health, which I most cordially rejoice to hear you are recovering, and as fervently hope you will entirely recover. I have the highest opinion of the element of water as a constant beverage; having so deep a conviction of the goodness and wisdom of Providence, that I am persuaded that when it indulged us in such a luxurious variety of eatables, and gave us but one drinkable, it intended that our sole liquid should be both wholesome and corrective. Your system I know is different; you hold that mutton and water were the only cock and hen that were designed for our nourishment; but I am apt to doubt whether draughts of water for six weeks are capable of restoring health, though some are strongly impregnated with mineral and other particles. Yet you have staggered me: the Bath water by your account is, like electricity, compounded of contradictory qualities; the one attracts and repels; the other turns a shilling yellow, and

whitens your jaundice. I shall hope to see you (when is that to be?) without alloy.

I must finish, wishing you three hundred and thirteen days of happiness for the new year that is arrived this morning: the fifty-two that you hold in commendam, I have no doubt will be rewarded as such good intentions deserve. Adieu, my *too* good friend! My direction shall talk superciliously to the postman;[1] but do let me continue unchangeably your faithful and sincere,

HOR. WALPOLE.[2]

2570. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 14, 1792.

As your Ladyship and Lord Ossory have been so good as to send your servant to inquire after me, I can do no less to save you such trouble, than tell you myself that I am in a moment of prettywellness, and have been able to return the visits of ceremony on my new christening; and last night, as befits children at Christmas, was carried to the pantomime of 'Cymon,' of which I was as tired as formerly in my middle age, for it is only Garrick's ginger-bread double-gilt. I know nothing else that will make a paragraph, for I will not talk of my own trist affairs, which take up my whole time, and present little but scenes of mortification, with which I have no right and no wish to trouble anybody else: but as I neither sought my present situation, nor certainly deserved it should be so bad, I can remain in the state that suited me, and that I had chalked out for myself and enjoyed; and shall not let an event that I could not nor was suffered to prevent, disturb my peace, nor make the least alteration in my plan of living for the little time I may have to come. I cannot help my name being changed; it shall change nothing else.

[1] He means franking his letter by his newly acquired title of Earl of Orford.—WRIGHT.

[2] This is the last letter signed Horace Walpole.—WRIGHT. He not unfrequently styled himself "The uncle of the late Earl of Orford." The Duke of Bedford has a letter of Walpole's with this signature.—DOVER.

2571. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 18, 1792.

I RETURN your Ladyship the verses, with my thanks: Lord Holland's are very easy, and the Round-Robin lively and clever. I inclose them as you order, with my signature, that title that has produced so much trouble to me, and made me be accused of both vanity and affected humility, though my disgust arose from mortified pride, as might easily have been guessed, if they, who like to censure, would give themselves the trouble to judge. I was rich as a commoner, for I was always content with my fortune, even when I had lost 1400*l.* a year by my brother Sir Edward's death: I am not vain of being the poorest earl in England, nor delighted to have outlived all my family, its estate, and Houghton, which, while it was *complete*, would have given me so much pleasure; now it will only be a mortifying ruin, which I will never see. To this prospect are thrown in several spiteful acts executed by my poor nephew to injure me, yet I do not impute them to him, for I have even learnt some instances which show he had principles. But having never been sound in his senses, it exposed him to the successive influence of a vile set of miscreants, who, to estrange him from me, had persuaded him that I wanted to shut him up; or worse, though I had twice for fifteen, and then for twelve months, had him entirely in my power, and had treated him both times with a care and tenderness unknown in those cases; the fatal consequence to him, poor soul! has been, that under pretence of removing him from the reach of my talons, they hurried him, in the height of a putrid fever, to Houghton, though he complained and begged to stop on the road, but was not allowed, relays being laid on the road for him; his sweats were stopped, and never returned! Had they been less precipitate, and however they have aspersed me, I will not return it, nor suspect them of killing him intentionally, which was not their interest; but there are proofs of such tampering about *wills*, of which one of the actors has, by a letter, offered to inform me, that nad the poor man not been despatched so suddenly, the mere title had probably been all my lot, as for three days I concluded it was, on the report of one who, it seems, knew only what was intended, and thought executed.

Thus, Madam, I have troubled you with a *little* more of my

present history, which I have ventured, because by your scratching under *little*, I concluded you thought I had mentioned too little. Secrets indeed, I have none; but family histories that interest nobody but one's self, are commonly tedious; and perhaps this, amounting to a whole page, may prove so too; but you shall have no more; though as almost all my mornings are engrossed by the consequences of my nephew's death, I have little leisure for anything I like, or to learn anything than can amuse others. The Pantheon was burnt, and my last sealed and gone to the post before I heard of that calamity: how fortunate, that two theatres should have been burnt in so very few years, and neither during any performance! I do not, however, intend to pass my remnant of time with lawyers and stewards; and as soon as the executors have finished, or settled their operations, I hope to fall again into my old train, and amuse myself with more agreeable trifles than business, for which I have no talent; and it is too late for me to learn the multiplication table. I have only to guard against my titularity drawing me into any debts or distresses that may intrench on my private fortune, which I have destined and appropriated to those who will want it, or miss me; and this is so sacred a point with me, that I made a resolution not to add a shilling of expense to my ordinary way of life, till at a year's end I shall see in a banker's hands, what addition there will be to my usual income. Till then I shall, in the loo-phrase, pass eldest, nor play without pam in my hand.

2572. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 4, 1792.

I owe your Ladyship a debt of thanks for Lord Holland's prologue and epilogue, which I liked; but having nothing new to tell you, I waited for some supply; and now Lord Ossory is come to town and will intercept not only my lean gazette, but will bring you all the flower of St. James's-street, and of the *two houses* which, whatever they may think of themselves, are but the first coffee-houses of the day, and supply the others during the season with their daily bread, and are forgotten the moment their ovens cease to be heated.

Your Ladyship mentions France, which is so truly contemptible, that I neither read nor inquire about it. Who can care for details of a mob? It will be time enough to know what mischief it has done when it shall be dispersed. That scribbling trollop Madame

de Sillery, and the viper that has cast his skin, the Bishop of Autun, are both here, but I believe, little noticed; and the woman and the serpent, I hope, will find few disposed to taste their rotten apples: if Bishop Watson would *pair off* with the prelate, one should have no objection.

Lord Ossory flatters me with hopes of seeing your Ladyship soon.

2573. TO SYLVESTER DOUGLAS, ESQ.[1]

(AFTERWARDS LORD GLENBERVIE.)

Berkeley Square, Feb. 15, 1792.

I HOPE my having been out of town for three or four days, will excuse my not obeying your commands sooner—and now when I do acknowledge the receipt of them, I am at a loss to express the confusion I feel at your much too obliging compliments, which I am very happy to receive as marks of your kindness and partiality, but have no right to accept as due to me. A performance [The Mysterious Mother], in which I am conscious of so many faults, and the subject of which is so disgusting, it is very indulgent in any reader to excuse; nor can the favour of such able judges as you, Sir, and the Duc de Nivernois, reconcile me to my own imprudence in letting it go out of my own hands—but having fallen into that slip of vanity, it is too late now to plead modesty, and there is no less [more?] affectation, I hope, in obeying you both, than in troubling you with more words about a trifle. I have therefore the honour, Sir, of offering you a correct copy, which I had printed some years ago to prevent a spurious edition, and as I succeeded, I did not publish mine. The edition printed in Ireland lately, is less exact; and though I stopped it for some time, it was to no purpose. Lord Cholmondeley is returning to Paris in a few days, and will carry a copy to the Duc de Nivernois. I have the honour to be, with great respect,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

ORFORD.

[1] Now first collected. Original in the possession of George Daniel, Esq., of Canonbury.—CUNNINGHAM.

2574. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, April 10, 1792.

KIRGATE orders me to tell your Ladyship that his master is mending as fast, or rather, as slowly, as the latter expected, who not being quite arrived at that miraculous age when people shoot out new hair and teeth, he does not reckon upon more than recovering some limbs and joints, that at their best are of very little use to him.

Confining my ambition to my very limited prospect, I do hope, Madam, to be as well again in health as I was last autumn—weaker probably, for every fit must weaken; but my iron stomach that has stood unhurt so many attacks, seems as if it would hold out till it has nothing left to defend but itself. I believe I shall be able to eat and sleep when I have no other faculties of a living animal; and were it not for that impertinent gadfly, Memory, the state would not be uncomfortable—many an alderman has been content with it—why should not I?

I know no news, Madam; there has not been a king murdered these two days, but the Jacobins promise themselves good sport yet!

It is observable that philosophy in three years has made more horrid strides towards the most shocking crimes and barbarities than the blindest enthusiasm did in some centuries!

2575. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

April 30, 1792.

I RETURN your Ladyship the print, which I flattered myself, as you said, you would call for.

I was very sorry to be out when Lord Ossory and Mr. Johns called. I was gone to take the air for the second time, but was so fatigued, that I believe it is in vain to struggle, and therefore if they are so good as to call again, they will probably find the remains of

Your most devoted ORFORD.[1]

[1] His first titled signature in the [Ossory] MSS.—R. VERNON SMITH.

2576. TO THOMAS BARRETT, ESQ.

DEAR SIR: *Berkeley Square, May* 14, 1792.

THOUGH my poor fingers do not yet write easily, I cannot help inquiring if Mabuse[1] is arrived safely at Lee, and fits his destined stall in the library. My amendment is far slower, *comme de raison*, than ever; and my weakness much greater. Another fit, I doubt, will confine me to my chair, if it does not do more; it is not worth haggling about that.

Dr. Darwin has appeared, superior in some respects to the former part. The 'Triumph of Flora,' beginning at the fifty-ninth line, is most beautifully and enchantingly imagined; and the twelve verses that by miracle describe and comprehend the creation of the universe out of chaos, are in my opinion the most sublime passage in any author, or in any of the few languages with which I am acquainted. There are a thousand other verses most charming, or indeed all are so, crowded with most poetic imagery, gorgeous epithets and style: and yet these four cantos do not please me equally with the 'Loves of the Plants.' This seems to me almost as much a rhapsody of unconnected parts; and is so deep, that I cannot read six lines together and know what they are about, till I have studied them in the long notes, and then perhaps do not comprehend them; but all this is my fault, not Dr. Darwin's. Is he to blame, that I am no natural philosopher, no chemist, no metaphysician? One misfortune will attend this glorious work; it will be little read but by those who have no taste for poetry, and who will be weighing and criticising his positions, without feeling the imagination, harmony, and expression of the versification. Is not it extraordinary, dear Sir, that two of our very best poets, Garth and Darwin, should have been physicians?[2] I believe they have left all the lawyers wrangling at the turnpike of Parnassus. Adieu, dear Sir! Yours most cordially.

[1] A capital picture by that master, then lately purchased by Mr. Barrett.—WRIGHT.

[2] We had two better poets physicians, Akenside and Armstrong; but this Walpole would not have admitted.—CUNNINGHAM.

2577. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Monday, 14th.

I HAVE been much mortified, Madam, that when your Ladyship has done me the honour of calling on me, there has been company with me. That I fear will generally be the case from half an hour after one till four, which is high-tide at my coffee-house. Your Ladyship objects to the evening, though except Mr. Churchill and my sister, and Mr. Conway and Lady Aylesbury, I do not know six persons who ever do come to me in an evening, and they come very rarely indeed; but I will not presume to dictate to your Ladyship, and submit to my lot, as I am forced to do in every thing else.

2578. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

From the House that Jack Built,
Childernmass Day.

MADAM:

BY the Dunstable coach I make bold to send your Ladyship the raw head and bloody bones of the only giant I have killed this season, very few having come over this year on account of the scarcity and dearness of provisions; besides that a whole flock has gone to St. Petersburg to recruit the Empress's menagerie, since the disgrace of the Orlows: so that indeed I have had very little sport, and have only kept my hand in practice by shooting at flights of ostriches as they sat on the roof of our barn. We have no news, please your Ladyship, but that Tom Hickathrift has had two children in a wood by Patient Grizzel; and that Tom Thumb has betted a thousand pounds that he rides three horses at once next Newmarket meeting. Mother Goose begs her duty; poor soul, she is nothing the woman she was; in my mind, Madam, Charlotte Edwin, the old Scotch woman that says nothing but "*Waal! waal! what do you tall one now?*" is full as good company; so no more from your Ladyship's poor

Beadsman and Game-keeper,
JACK THE GIANT-KILLER.

2579. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

May 22, 1792.

I AM doubly sorry, Madam, to hear your Ladyship has been out of order, and that I missed the honour of seeing you before you go. I was trying change of air too; but I hope, as is most probable, that you will find it much more rapidly beneficial than I have done, who at most gain symptoms of amendment.

Should I hear any news before the newspaper, you shall know, or shall allow Kirgate to tell you, for my pen is as lame as its master, and likes as little to move.

2580. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, May 29, *in the morning.*

I RETURNED from Strawberry too late yesterday, Madam, to answer your Ladyship's letter incontinently, and this morning I was hindered by business and company; but my gratitude is not cooled by being postponed. I am indeed much obliged for the transcript of the letter on my "Wives." Miss Agnes has a *finesse* in her eyes and countenance that does not propose itself to you, but is very engaging on observation, and has often made herself preferred to her sister, who has the most exactly fine features, and only wants colour to make her face as perfect as her graceful person; indeed neither has good health nor the air of it. Miss Mary's eyes are grave, but she is not so herself; and, having much more application than her sister, she converses readily, and with great intelligence, on all subjects. Agnes is more reserved, but her compact sense very striking, and always to the purpose. In short, they are extraordinary beings, and I am proud of my partiality for them; and since the ridicule can only fall on me, and not on them, I care not a straw for its being said that I am in love with one of them—people shall choose which: it is as much with both as either, and I am infinitely too old to regard the *qu'en dit on.*

I know not a word of politics, Madam, except seeing with horror that the cowardly cannibals, as their own La Fayette calls his countrymen, and he is no democrat, are driving on the murder of their King and Queen; and the Duke of Brunswick, I fear, will

not be at Paris in time to prevent it. Another of their philosophic legislators—I forget the wretch's name—told the King lately, that he ought to have two chaplains about him. "I mean for the look of it," said he, "for I am atheist myself, and do not mind those things;" no, nor assassination, nor any crime and injustice that human depravity can engender in the mind. They are going to empty their land of the nonjuring clergy, and will leave it, as it deserves to be, a *repaire* of wild beasts.

Fortune, that now and then seems to lift up a corner of the bandage over her eyes, played a malicious trick yesterday. There was a little lottery of French porcelain and millinery drawn at Lady Cecilia Johnston's, at a guinea a ticket, and no blanks. Lady Anne Lambton drew a *bonnet aristocrat* (so marked), stamped with *fleurs de lis* and *Vive le Roi*.

Pray, Madam, let me have early notice of your return, for I shall leave town on Thursday se'nnight.

2581. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, June 27, 1792.

THE wet and cold weather has so retarded my recovery, Madam, that if Strawberry had had a dry thread to its back, and I had not been so unwell ever since I came hither, I should have proposed to your Ladyship and Lord Ossory to honour me with a visit—yet though that eternal weeper the month of June has certainly done me no good, I need not look beyond myself to account for my weakness. Almost half a century of gout, with the addition of a quarter of one, would undermine a stronger frame than mine; and if I live to have another fit, it will probably for the remnant confine me to my own house. As I can but just creep about, I have less reason than most people now to complain of the climate; and as I love to find out consolations, I have discovered that nature, as a compensation, has given us verdure and coal-mines in lieu of summer; and, as I can afford to keep a good fire, and have a beautiful view from my window, why should I complain? I do not wish to amble to Ham Common and be disappointed of a pastoral at Mrs. Hobart's. Poor Lady! She has already miscarried of two *fêtes* of which she was big, and yet next minute she was pregnant of another. Those *fausses couches* and Mrs. Jordan's epistle to her, and daily as well as nightly robberies, have occasioned as much cackling in this

district as if a thousand hen-roosts had been disturbed at once. Three coaches coming in society, with a horseman besides, from the play at Richmond, were robbed last week by a squadron of seven foot-pads, close to Mr. Cambridge's. If some check is not put to the hosts of banditti, Mr. T. Paine will soon be able to raise as well-disciplined an army as he could wish. But how can I talk even of the outrages that one foresees in speculation, when one reads the recent accounts of those of the Tuileries! What barbarity in the monsters of Paris not at once to massacre the King and Queen, who have suffered a thousand deaths for three years together, trembling for themselves, for their children, and for each other! I almost hate the Kings of Hungary and Prussia as much as the detestable Jacobins do, for not being already at the gates of Paris—ay, and while they suffer those wretches to exist, for conniving at the Tisiphone of the North! They tolerate a diabolic anarchy and countenance the destruction of the most amiable and most noble of all revolutions that ever took place. How can one make an option between monarchs and mobs!

Well! with all my lofty airs, so little is my mind, Madam, that I can turn from horror at mighty convulsions to indignation at puny spite and vulgar malice. How contemptible is the National Assembly! Not content with annihilating, vilifying, plundering and driving away their nobility, they have wreaked their paltry spleen on the title-deeds and genealogies of the old families, and deprived the exiles of the miserable satisfaction of knowing who were their ancestors. Yet it will not surprise me if, as after burning the Bastile, they have crammed Orleans with state prisoners, they should turn the galleys into a Heralds' Office, and, like Cromwell, create Hewson the cobbler, and such heroes, dukes and peers!

Thursday.

I was interrupted yesterday, Madam, and am now going to London, not as you kindly advise, because Berkeley-square is wholesomer than the country (for *to-day* the weather is brave and shining, and what for want of sterling summer, one may call—almost—hot); but to receive money; which I have not done yet from my estate, or rather for selling one; out of the wreck of my nephew's fortune. Some lands that he had bought in the Fens, to *adorn* the parsonage-hovel that he inhabited at Eriswell, escaped and fell to me—by not being entailed, or pocketed, or remembered, and I have sold them for two thousand guineas. This will not

enrich me, but will pay a fine for church-lands that I must renew, in addition to the incumbrances charged on me for repayment of my own fortune and my brother's; the latter of which I certainly did not receive, nor either of us either, till precisely forty years after they had been bequeathed! How little did I think of ever being master of fen-lands and church-lands, the latter of which I always abominated, and did not covet the former! I betray my ignorance in figures and calculations on every transaction; but thank my stars, can laugh at myself, as much as I suppose my lawyers and agents do at me, especially when I tell them I care not how little I receive, provided my new wealth does not draw my private fortune into debt, which I have destined to those who will want it; and therefore I still crawl about with my pair of horses, and will not add a postilion, till at the end of the year I shall know whether I really am to receive anything or not. This is the sum of my worldly prudence, Madam, and I am as indifferent about the balance of the estate, as I was about the title of (though not of being your Ladyship's ever devoted servant) ORFORD.

2582. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, July 7, 1792.

I AM bound to thank your Ladyship for recommending the baths of Lisbon to me; but, ah! Madam, it is too late for Æson to try a new kettle! I cannot encounter the trouble and ennui of such a voyage, nor sacrifice six months, that I may possibly possess in tolerable comfort, for the chance of adding to my tattered rags of life half an ell more.

So we are forced to rejoice at Lord Cornwallis's victory over Tippoo!—for we have usurped India till it is become part of our vitals, and we can no more afford to part with it than with a great artery;—and yet one has the assurance to rail at the grand usurperess, who would sluice all the veins of Europe and Asia to add another chapter to her murderous history. Well! if she dies soon, she will find the river Styx turned to a torrent of blood of her shedding! What! are there no *poissardes* at Petersburg? Are they afraid of a greater fury than themselves?—Or, don't they venerate her, because she is a Mirabeau in petticoats, and execrable enough to be a queen to their taste?

You will smile, Madam, when I tell you that t'other day I

received a letter from a gentleman of the society to propose to me to continue my nephew's subscription to *Hawking* in Norfolk. If the Antiquarian Society would have engaged me in such a truly noble Gothic institution, I should have wondered less: I am well read in Juliana Berners's 'Boke of St. Albans,' and know I am entitled to be drawn with a hawk on my fist to mark my nobility; but not being much versed in the practical part of the science, I shall decline enrolling myself in the band of Falconers, till I have sued for seisin of my other baronial and manorial honours, which I have suffered to lie dormant, not being hitherto worth a knight's fee—nor, in truth, having ever ambitioned to be more than what I have been for above forty years, a burgess of Twickenham, and a retainer of the honour of Ampthill, and consequently

Your Ladyship's poor beadsman, the late H. W.

P.S. I have this moment received a letter from Lady Waldegrave, acquainting me with one she has just had from Lord Cornwallis, expressing his affectionate remembrance of his great friend her Lord, and assuring her that for his sake he will, while he lives, perform every office of friendship and assistance in his power to her and her children. How very amiable in the moment of victory to find Alexander, the conqueror of India, thinking of writing a consolatory letter to a widow at the other end of the world, and tying up a branch of cypress with a bundle of laurels and boughs of olive!

2583. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, July 17, 1792.

The 'Memoirs,' about which your Ladyship inquires, are probably those of a Lady Fanshawe, wife, if I do not mistake, of a Sir Richard Fanshawe,[1] who, if I do not again mistake, died Minister in Spain. They were shown to me a few years ago, and I had been told they were very curious, which was a little more than I found them, though not unentertaining; they chiefly dwelt on private domestic distresses, and on what the aristocrats of that time were apprehending from their enemies, who, however, were not such tigers and hyænas as the French of this day. Still so few private

[1] Lady Fanshawe's instructive 'Memoirs' were published in 1829, with notes by Sir Harris Nicolas.—Cunningham.

letters of the civil war from 1640 to 1660 have been preserved, probably from the fears of both writers and receivers, that one likes to read any details.

The letter pretended to be written by my father to the late King [George II.], advising a peerage to be conferred on Mr. Pulteney, I am thoroughly convinced, is spurious; the length alone would be suspicious—but I have better detection to offer. I was alone with Sir Robert when he came from St. James's the last time he saw George II., and when he had advised the peerage in question, of which he told me, and I have not forgotten the action of his hand, which he turned as when one locks a door, adding, "I have shut the door on him." Pulteney had gobbled the honour, but perceived his error too late, for the very first day that he entered the House of Lords he dashed his patent on the floor in a rage, and vowed he would never take it up; but it was too late—he had kissed the King's hand for it.[1]

I am going to add two or three other paragraphs on another article of the 'European Magazine,' that suggested your Ladyship's inquiries, but on a much more insignificant subject, myself. You may find there a letter signed 'Scrutator,' repeated from one printed in the 'Cambridge Chronicle.'[2] Both affirm a most gross falsehood, viz., that I have denied having ever written to Chatterton. Had I done so, I must have been delirious, must have wantonly given myself the lie at the very moment that my veracity was proved. I had affirmed in my *printed* defence that I had answered his first letter. The lad's mother died last autumn, and in her custody was found that answer,[3] which some of the lad's partizans printed. I had kept no copy, but it perfectly agreed with my account, and I am persuaded was genuine. A few months afterwards, in a subsequent Magazine, appeared a letter signed by a barbarous name, maintaining that I had desired my friends to declare that I never had answered a letter of Chatterton. This was too absurd to deserve notice; but Dr. Farmer, without the smallest connection with me, published a few lines showing the impossibility that I could ever have expressed such a desire, so destructive of my own cause and credit, and hinting a very just suspicion of the unknown letter-writer, who, I have no doubt, was the same person as 'Scrutator,' and invented the first falsehood as a ground for the second, choosing to confound two facts

[1] Compare vol. i. p. cxlix.—CUNNINGHAM.
[2] Reprinted in Walpole's Works, vol. iv. p. 241.
[3] See it in vol. v. p. 152.—CUNNINGHAM.

that had not the least relation to each other, and which stood thus. Poor Barrett, author of the 'History of Bristol,' printed there two letters to me found among Chatterton's papers, and which the simple man imagined the lad had sent to me, but most assuredly never did, as too preposterous even for him to venture, after he had found that I began to suspect his forgeries; for instance, he had ascribed the invention of heraldry to Hengist, and of painted glass to an unknown monk in the reign of King Edmund. On seeing those marvellous productions, I wrote to Dr. Lort declaring I never had received those two letters, and begging he would affirm so. This denial is now converted into a denial of a letter I did write, and have declared I did; and for all this blundering and incredible falsehood I am persuaded I am obliged to Dr. Glynn, an old doting physician and Chattertonian at Cambridge.[1] But I have too much contempt both for him and anonymous writers, who, by concealing themselves, betray a consciousness of guilt, to make any reply, though I am persuaded that a farther forgery hereafter is meditated, by the pains that have been taken to bolster up the present plan by authenticating my handwriting before a notary public, though I certainly never denied it, and do believe it mine, though I have not seen it, by its agreeing with my own account of the substance. What solemn folly! what transparent artifice! but, as my kind letter of advice to Chatterton was probably found too among the lad's papers, and is *not* published, though I have demanded it should be, I conclude it is meant, when I shall be no more, to produce a forged one of no kind complexion. But who will believe it mine? I don't say but those who forge it will assert their belief of it; but my antagonists having displayed too much propensity to charge me, it is totally incredible if they were in possession of a scrap that would hurt me, that they would suppress it; and therefore, as similitude of hands may be forged, no notary public will persuade any fair person that a harsh letter, circumstantiating my want of truth, and which I have dared and defied any person possessed of such a paper to exhibit publicly, could exist, and would not have been produced to my confusion while I am living. When I shall be dead it can only recoil on the fabricators, and therefore I shall beseech your Ladyship to preserve this letter, and permit it to appear, if you shall ever hereafter see such a false accusation arise, as, on my honour, I assure you it must be, if a letter of advice from me to Chatterton does not appear as

[1] Compare Letter to Cole, vol. vii. p. 110, and vol. viii. p. 137 and 206.—CUNNINGHAM.

kind as a parent or guardian could have written to that rash and unhappy adventurer.

I beg a million of pardons for troubling your Ladyship with this detail, and still more with this request; but, as I have declared in print that I would enter no more into that strange and silly controversy, and as I scorn to stoop to answer nameless antagonists, I presume to deposit my defence, should it ever be necessary, in such noble and friendly hands as your Ladyship's, and leave Dr. Glynn and such contemptible adversaries to wage war without an opponent, like a man that plays at cards alone, right hand against left—very merry pastime! Your Ladyship's most devoted,

ORFORD.

2584. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 18, 1792.

I HAVE wanted to write to vent myself, Madam, but the French have destroyed the power of words; there is neither substantive nor epithet that can express the horror they have excited! Brutal insolence, bloody ferocity, savage barbarity, malicious injustice, can no longer be used but of some civilised country, where there is still some appearance of government. Atrocious *frenzy* would, till these days, have sounded too outrageous to be pronounced of a whole city —now it is too temperate a phrase for Paris, and would seem to palliate the enormity of their guilt by supposing madness the spring of it—but though one pities a herd of swine that are actuated by demons to rush into the sea, even those diabolical vagaries are momentary, not stationary; they do not last for three years together, nor infect a whole nation—thank God! it is but one nation that has ever produced *two massacres* of Paris!

I have lived too long! I confess I did not conceive how abominable human nature could be on so extensive a scale as from Paris to Marseilles; nor indeed so absurd. I did not apprehend that you could educate and polish men, till you made them ten times worse than the rudest ignorance could produce. I have been shocked at scalping Indians—but I never despised savages, because they are only cruel to *enemies*, and have had no instruction, nor means of it—it is well for them!—A band of philosophers, academicians, and pedants would train them in few years to be systematic wolves and tigers; would teach them to contradict all their own

professions and acts; to provoke the most injudicious wars; to wish to be a republic and massacre 800 republicans in a morning of a country whose forces and intrepidity they ought to dread; and to pull down one prison where there were but six men confined, and turn a large city (Orleans) into a jail, cram it with prisoners whom they never dared to try, because probably guiltless; and thence sentence them all to be massacred at once, because—who can imagine why, unless that the Parisians were not drunk enough with blood!

But of all their barbarities the most inhuman has been their *not* putting the poor wretched King and Queen to death three years ago! If thousands have been murdered, tortured, broiled, it has been extempore; but Louis and his Queen have suffered daily deaths in apprehension for themselves and their children. Oh! that Catherine Slay-Czar had been Queen of France in the room of Antoinette. I do not say it would have been any security for her *husband's* life; but it would have saved thousands and thousands of other lives, and preserved the late new, amiable, and disinterested Constitution of Poland. Well, that fury of the North has barefaced her own hypocrisy—she pretended to give a code of laws to her ruffians, and to emancipate their slaves, and now plunges the poor Poles again into vassalage under a vile system!

> "Esse aliquos manes et subterranea regna
> Nec pueri credunt nisi qui nondum ære,"

that is, who have not the brazen front of Catherine.

Did you read, Madam, the beautiful protest of Malachowski, the Marshal of the Diet? I am glad some sweet herbs spring up amidst so many poisonous plants. The Austrian and Prussian for confederating with Catherine deserve only to be saved to scourge France. Their declaring against conquest for themselves, but assures me more of their meaning it; and partitioned I hope France may be: it will be better for the French; a smaller kingdom may have some freedom,—if French can deserve to be free; a vast kingdom cannot be; and it would be better for Europe, and for us, too, though, thank them, it will be long before they can or will do anything but sluice their own veins! They are cursed with infernal *Phœnixes;* a Petion springs from a Mirabeau's ashes! What a nation they are! Even their vanity amidst all their miseries and disgraces is not to be allayed, is unalterable. T'other night, at the Duke of Queensberry's, the Viscount de Noailles, one of the hottest

heads of the first National Assembly, but who is come hither, I believe, despairing of the cause, desired to be presented to me. I knew him when he was here formerly, and in France, but did not intend to remember him. In a tone of much civility and compliment he said, "*Vous avez fait de grandes avances.*" I did not guess what he meant. He continued: "*Oui, vous êtes fort avancés dans les vêtemens, dans la nourriture.*" I believe he thought he remembered that we used twenty years ago to wear goat-skins, and live upon haws and acorns. I saw he meant to be civil, so would not answer, "*Oui, nous sommes le plus florissant pais de l'Europe.*"

You will like a speech of Lord William Gordon. Madame de Gand, the Duke's passion, in one of these hot evenings, had the fire lighted, and was sitting with her back to it, literally on the hearth. Lord William said, "I see the Duke likes his meat over-done."

Madame de Coigny, who is here, too, and has a great deal of wit, on hearing that the mob at Paris have burnt the bust of their late favourite, Monsieur d'Epremenil, said, "*Il n'y a rien qui brûle sitôt que les lauriers secs.*"

I recollect that your Ladyship bade me answer Mrs. Somebody's novel called 'Desmond.' Indeed, I cannot—I have never seen it nor ever will. I neither answer Dr. Glynn, nor a *poissarde*. Twenty years ago I might have laughed at both; but they are too little fry, and I am too old to take notice of them. Besides, when leviathans and crocodiles and alligators tempest and infest the ocean, I shall not go a privateering in a cock-boat against a smuggling pinnace, any more than I would have subscribed my silver shoe-buckles or cork-screw with my Lord Mayor and Co., to save Poland from an army of 200,000 Russians.

Adieu, Madam.

2585. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

My dear Saint Hannah: *Strawberry Hill, Aug.* 21, 1792.

I have frequently been going to write to you, but checked myself. You are so good and so bad, that I feared I should interrupt some act of benevolence on one side; and, on the other, that you would not answer my letter in three months. I am glad to find, as an Irishman would say, that the way to make you answer is not to speak first. But, ah! I am a brute to upbraid any moment of your silence, though I regretted it when I hear that your kind intentions

have been prevented by frequent cruel pain! and that even your rigid abstemiousness does not remove your complaints. Your heart is always aching for others, and your head for yourself. Yet the latter never hinders the activity of the former. What must your tenderness not feel now, when a whole nation of monsters is burst forth? The *second* massacre of Paris has exhibited horrors that even surpass the former. Even the Queen's women were butchered in the Tuileries, and the tigers chopped off the heads from the dead bodies, and tossed them into the flames of the palace. The tortures of the poor King and Queen, from the length of their duration, surpass all example; and the brutal insolence with which they were treated on the 10th, all invention. They were dragged through the Place Vendome to see the statue of Louis the Fourteenth in fragments, and told it was to be the King's fate; and he, the most harmless of men, was told he is a monster; and this after three years of sufferings. King, and Queen, and children, were shut up in a room, without nourishment, for twelve hours. One who was a witness has come over, and says he found the Queen sitting on the floor, trembling like an aspen in every limb, and her sweet boy the Dauphin asleep against her knee! She has not one woman to attend her that she ever saw, but a companion of her misery, the King's sister, an heroic virgin saint, who, on the former irruption into the palace, flew to and clung to her brother, and being mistaken for the Queen, and the hellish fiends wishing to murder her, and somebody aiming to undeceive them, she said, "Ah! ne les détrompez pas!" Was not that sentence the sublime of innocence? But why do I wound your thrilling nerves with the relation of such horrible scenes? Your *blackmanity* must allow some of its tears to these poor victims. For my part, I have an abhorrence of politics, if one can so term these tragedies, which make one harbour sentiments one naturally abhors; but can one refrain without difficulty from exclaiming such wretches should be exterminated? They have butchered hecatombs of Swiss, even to *porters* in private houses, because they often are, and always are called, *Le Suisse*. Think on fifteen hundred persons, probably more, butchered on the 10th, in the space of eight hours. Think on premiums voted for the assassination of several princes, and do not think that such execrable proceedings have been confined to Paris; no, Avignon, Marseilles, &c. are still smoking with blood! Scarce the Alecto of the North, the legislatress and the usurper of Poland, has occasioned the spilling of larger torrents!

I am almost sorry that your letter arrived at this crisis; I cannot help venting a little of what haunts me. But it is better to thank Providence for the tranquillity and happiness we enjoy in this country, in spite of the philosophising serpents we have in our bosom, the Paines, the Tookes, and the Woolstoncrafts. I am glad you have not read the tract of the last-mentioned writer. I would not look at it, though assured it contains neither metaphysics nor politics; but as she entered the lists on the latter, and borrowed her title from the demon's book, which aimed at spreading the *wrongs* of men, she is excommunicated from the pale of my library. We have had enough of new systems, and the world a great deal too much, already.

Let us descend to private life. Your friend Mrs. Boscawen, I fear, is unhappy: she has lost most suddenly her son-in-law, Admiral Leveson. Mrs. Garrick I have scarcely seen this whole summer. She is a liberal Pomona to me—I will not say an Eve; for though she reaches fruit to me, she will never let me in, as if I were a boy, and would rob her orchard.

As you interest yourself about a certain trumpery old person I with infinite gratitude will add a line on him. He is very tolerably well, weak enough certainly, yet willing to be contented; he is satisfied with knowing that he is at his best. Nobody grows stronger at seventy-five, nor recovers the use of limbs half lost; nor—though neither deaf nor blind, nor in the latter most material point at all impaired; nor, as far as he can find on strictly watching himself, much damaged as to common uses in his intellects—does the gentleman expect to avoid additional decays, if his life shall be further protracted. He has been too fortunate not to be most thankful for the past, and most submissive for what is to come, be it more or less. He forgot to say that the warmth of his heart towards those he loves and esteems has not suffered the least diminution, and consequently he is as fervently as ever Saint Hannah's most sincere friend and humble servant,

ORFORD.

2586. TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 31, 1792.

YOUR long letter and my short one crossed one another upon the road. I knew I was in your debt; but I had nothing to say but

what you know better than I; for you read all the French papers, and I read none, as they have long put me out of all patience: and besides, I hear so much of their horrific proceedings, that they quite disturb me, and have given me what I call the French disease; that is, a barbarity that I abhor, for I cannot help wishing destruction to thousands of human creatures whom I never saw. But when men have worked themselves up into tigers and hyænas, and labour to communicate their appetite for blood, what signifies whether they walk on two legs or four, or whether they dwell in cities, or in forests and dens? Nay, the latter are the more harmless wild beasts; for they only cranch a poor traveller now and then, and when they are famished with hunger: the others, though they have dined, cut the throats of some hundreds of poor Swiss for an afternoon's luncheon. Oh! the execrable nation!

I cannot tell you any new particulars, for Mesdames de Cambis and d'Hennin, my chief informers, are gone to Goodwood to the poor Duchesse de Biron, of whose recovery I am impatient to hear; and so I am of the cause of her very precipitate flight and panic. She must, I think, have had strong motives; for two years ago I feared she was much too courageous, and displayed her intrepidity too publicly. If I did not always condemn the calling *b*ad people *m*ad people, I should say all Paris is gone distracted: they furnish provocation to every species of retaliation, by publishing rewards for assassination of kings and generals, and cannot rest without incensing all Europe against them.

The Duchess of York gave a great entertainment at Oatlands on her Duke's birth-day; sent to his tradesmen in town to come to it, and allowed two guineas a-piece to each for their carriage; gave them a dance, and opened the ball herself with the Prince of Wales. A company of strollers came to Weybridge to act in a barn: she was solicited to go to it, and did out of charity, and carried all her servants. Next day a Methodist teacher came to preach a charity sermon in the same theatre, and she consented to hear it on the same motive; but her servants desired to be excused, on not understanding English. "Oh!" said the Duchess, "but you went to the comedy, which you understood less, and you shall go to the sermon;" to which she gave handsomely, and for them. I like this.

Tack this to my other fragment, and then, I trust, I shall not be a defaulter in correspondence. I own I am become an indolent poor creature: but is that strange? With seventy-five years over my

head, or on the point of being so; with a chalk-stone in every finger; with feet so limping, that I have been but twice this whole summer round my own small garden; and so much weaker than I was, can I be very comfortable, but when sitting quiet and doing nothing? All my strength consists in my sleep, which is as vigorous as at twenty: but with regard to letter-writing, I have so many to write on business which I do not understand, since the unfortunate death of my nephew, that, though I make them as brief as possible, half-a-dozen short ones tire me as much as a long one to an old friend; and as the busy ones must be executed, I trespass on the others, and remit them to another day. Norfolk has come very mal-à-propos into the end of my life, and certainly never entered into my views and plans, and I, who could never learn the multiplication table, was not intended to transact leases, direct repairs of farm-houses, settle fines for church lands, negotiate for lowering interest on mortgages, &c. In short, as I was told formerly, though I know several things, I never understood anything useful. A-propos, the letter of which Lady Cecilia Johnstone told you is not at all worth your seeing. It was an angry one to a parson who oppresses my tenants, and will go to law with them about tithes. She came in as I was writing it; and as I took up the character of parson myself, and preached to him as pastor of a flock which it did not become him to lead into the paths of law, instead of those of peace, I thought it would divert, and showed it to her. Adieu! I have been writing to you till midnight, and my poor fingers ache. Yours ever.

2587. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 4, 1792.

I SHOULD have been very happy, Madam, if your Ladyship's attendance on Lady Ravensworth would have allowed you to honour me with a visit as Lord Ossory did: I did not know she had been ill, and am rejoiced to hear of her recovery.

The day before yesterday I had been out for half-an-hour, and at my return found at my gate the Attorney-General and Lady Louisa, and, to my great surprise, Lady Sutherland and her eldest boy, though they had arrived from Paris but two nights before. It proves the great tranquillity and courage with which her Ladyship behaved there, when, after so long an absence and such scenes of

horror, she is calm enough to have a mind to see my house. I had the honour of knowing her a little, and of dining with her before the embassy, but little thought of seeing her here at this moment. She is much improved in beauty. Lord Strathearn is a very pretty child, and so impregnated with what he has seen and heard, that he was surprised at seeing no cannon in the streets of London, and asked the Attorney-General where they were; and perceiving some points of rails higher than others, he said—"but there *are* pikes here!" I believe he would have found none, nor cannon, at Warsaw, had Catherine Slay-Czar suffered their glorious constitution to take place.

When your Ladyship's querist will show me a glimpse of resemblance between the Diet of Poland and the former National Assembly in France, even from their outset, I will for that moment of similitude, if it can be discovered, admire the latter as I adore the former: but I am no dupe to words, nor honour the term Revolution for the mere sound. A revolution is not to be commended for simply overturning a government, though as bad as that of France was. A mob, or a czarina, or janizaries, can destroy good or bad. A revolution, before it has any claim to praise, must give a better government, and that can only be done by integrity, wisdom, and temper, as our revolution did, and as the generous and disinterested Poles would have done—*sed diis aliter visum!* I should rather say *diabolis*. Pedantry, actuated by envy and every species of injustice and barbarity, and impregnated with vanity and insolence, and void of any plan but that of seizing power, and, I believe, plunder, were not likely to produce patriots, and, still less, legislators. Accordingly, beginning by disregarding and disobeying that first groundwork of liberty, the intentions and instructions of the whole nation their constituents, they hurried into contradicting their own decrees as fast as they made them, pronounced property sacred and seized it everywhere, declared for universal peace, and usurped Papal and German dominions, proclaimed everybody at liberty to live where they pleased, but burnt their houses and forced them to fly, and then confiscated their estates if they did not return at the hazard of their lives. The option of perjury or starving was another benefit bestowed on all the conscientious clergy. The Bastille (where only six prisoners were found, rather a moderate number for such a capital as Paris) was destroyed, and every other prison was crammed, nay, the city of Orleans was turned into a vast jail, whence nobody was even indulged with a trial; and, at last, by every species of

artifice, falsehood, and imposture, the philosophic legislators, and their excrements the clubs, have worked themselves and the people up to such a pitch of infernal frenzy, that they have produced a second St. Barthélemi, and realized what has been thought a legend in history—in short, a whole senate has assumed the accursed dignity of the "old man of the mountain," and spawned a legion of assassins! and with still more impudence, for he did not proclaim his mandates openly for the murder of princes and generals.

The *former* National Assembly did not commit *all* these atrocious enormities, but they led the way, and checked none. Did they punish the barbarities at Avignon and at other places? What excesses did they disapprove? What liberty did they confer but that of leaving every man free to hang and murder whom he pleased? In short, madam, they have blasted and branded liberty —perhaps for centuries—and for that and their barbarity, I abhor them; and by destroying their own country—who can foresee for how long? Posterity will look on them with horror; and their not having in three years of convulsions produced one man, but the villanous Mirabeau, eminent for abilities, on the contrary, legions of folly, absurdity, and ignorance, will give future generations as much contempt for the French, as devout people have for the Jews.

If anybody from such a mass of detestable proceedings can pick out a moment where I am to stop and admire, and where I am to divide my partiality to the Poles with the revolutionists in France, or to rank the Barnaves, Lameths, and Noailleses with that true patriot Malachowski, whose honest and humane protest brought the tears into my eyes, I will confess that I have been blind for a moment; or I will even go so far as to say for the term *revolution*—

> "Quod si non aliam venturo fata *Neroni*
> Invenere viam—
> Scelera ipsa nefasque
> Hâc mercede placent."

The Polish revolution and ours were noble, wise, and moderate—wise because moderate; but to subvert all justice and order for pedantic and speculative experiments, without having anything to substitute in their places, as their contradictions have demonstrated, is the acme of folly, incapacity, and ignorance of human nature; and I shall take leave to despise the late august diet—the present is below contempt; and if the nation ever recovers its senses, it will be ashamed of descending from such progenitors. Adieu, Madam; but pray set me on writing no more declamations.

2588. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 10, 1792.

MADAM, I return the inclosed[1] as soon as I can, not thinking it at all right to keep it—indeed, it frightens me; but I hope you will not treat my poor rhapsodies in the same manner: they are always the skimmings of my thoughts at the moment of writing, and the next day I do not at all recollect what I have written. Above all things, I would not have the presumption even to seem to enter into a controversy with Mr. Fitzpatrick; I have too high an opinion of his parts and wit to think myself in any degree a match for him—half superannuated as I know myself, I should yield to understandings much inferior to his. Indeed, I always do shun disputes Whatever can be known to a certainty, is known; what cannot be, may never be decided. I have another cogent reason for avoiding disputation; I may very likely, in arguing, set out in the wrong; and if I do, I am pretty sure of remaining so, as one grows partial to one's own arguments.

How long the French remained in the right at the beginning of the Revolution, may be a question—if they are so still, and if the butchery of 4000 prisoners, men and women, untried, is a necessary and common consequence of reformation or self-defence—mercy on me!—I shall be persuaded that I am a good deal more than *half* superannuated, for I certainly cannot beat any such horrible opinion into the head of my Whiggism. I know I have always been a coward on points of religion and politics. Above twenty years ago, in a conversation on those topics with that speculative heroine, Mrs. Macaulay, I shocked her by avowing, that had I been Luther, and thoroughly convinced—a little more perhaps than he was, that I should be perfectly in the right in attacking the church of Rome, yet could I have foreseen (and perhaps he ought to have foreseen) that in order to save the souls of as many unborn millions as you please, I should be the occasion of spilling the blood—come, I will be moderate, and say, of only three hundred thousand living persons, I should have boggled, and nothing but a very palpable angel indeed, with a most substantial commission from heaven, would have persuaded me to register my patent in the chancery of my conscience, and set about the business.

[1] None with the MSS.—R. VERNON SMITH

For the hosts of assassins at Paris I think them palpable devils; and a little worse than the spiritual ones, of whom we are told. They corroborate too an old axiom, that extremes meet; enthusiasm and philosophy are those extremes, and have proved of the same trade. What can be said for the late massacres at Paris, and those that have been raging for three years there, at Avignon, Marseilles, &c., that is not pleadable for the St. Barthélemi, for the slaughter of the Vaudois, for the destruction of the Mexicans and Peruvians, and for the ravages by Mahomet and the Ottomans? Why, certain men, Charles IX., Philip II., Louis XIV., and their similars *thought* they were warranted to sacrifice any number of their fellow-creatures in order to make other numbers something happier—in the sentiments of those self-constituted executioners. For the people of France, till they were told otherwise by the philosophers, I doubt a little whether they were a quarter so unhappy as they are at present, especially having had that singular felicity, as Frenchmen, of thinking that France was in every point preferable to the rest of the universe. But here I will stop, and neither now nor any more touch on the subject. My opinions are for myself. I meddle not with those of others, nor are they of importance to me, who have so little time to remain here. I am only concerned to have a worse opinion of mankind than I thought it possible to conceive, or than any reading had given me, for this last butchery in the prisons, was, as far as I know, unparalleled. The story of the "old man of the mountain" and his assassins was rife at the time of the crusades: I do not recollect at this moment in what books it is to be found. They are, I believe, mentioned by Joinville, and perhaps in general dictionaries—posterity will find the revival of them in the records of the most august diet in the world, and in all the histories of the Revolution in France!

In the midst of these atrocious scenes, it is impossible now and then not to smile, not only at the egregious follies and puerilities of the Assembly and its tribunes, whose panic and despair break out in insolence, while no enemy is actually in sight, and who butcher women because they dread the Duke of Brunswick; but collateral incidents are too ludicrous not to check one's sighs, and loosen one's muscles. In the midst of the massacre of Monday last Mr. Merry immortalised, not by his verses, but by those of the 'Baviad,' was mistaken for the Abbé Maury, and was going to be hoisted to the *lanterne*. He cried out he was Merry the poet—the ruffians who probably had never read the scene in Shakspeare yet replied, "then

we will hang you for your bad verses"—but he escaped better than Cinna, I don't know how, and his fright cost him but a few *gossamery tears*—and I suppose he will be happy to recross the *silky ocean*, and return to shed dolorous nonsense in rhyme over the woes of *this* happy country.

P. S.—I was a hearty American, Madam, as you know well, and never heard of massacres there in cold blood; and Poland showed that revolutions may be effected without assassination. The French have stabbed liberty for centuries, and made despotism itself preferable to such tyrannic anarchy. Muley Ishmael, King of Morocco, it is true, used for a morning's exercise to despatch a dozen or two of his subjects; but he would have been sadly tired and overheated if he had aimed at lopping a fourth or even an eighth part of the heads that fell in the prisons at Paris on the *bloody Monday;* and besides Muley's victims thought it a mighty honour, if not the high road to Paradise, to die by the royal hand. I scarcely think that the Parisian butchers meant any favour to those they sacrificed, though they cut the throats of 120 poor priests, who had preferred beggary to perjury and violation of their consciences. If liberty can digest such a hecatomb without kicking, she must have a pretty strong stomach—not Catherine of Russia a stronger. I wish she had been Queen of France for the last three years!—Your Ladyship's devoted, &c

2589. TO THE EARL OF HARCOURT.[1]

My dear Lord, *Strawberry Hill, Oct.* 4, 1792.

If I am taking too great a liberty, I trust your Lordship will forgive it, as I flatter myself its object will contribute to your satisfaction, since its consequence will be doing—I will not say honour, but justice to Nuneham.

Mr. Farrington the painter (who married a cousin of mine) is, as your Lordship already knows, engaged on making drawings for a superb set of views on the course of the Thames. Nuneham being one of his loveliest features, it would be pity that you yourself, my Lord, should not point out and preside over what he shall

[1] Now first published.—Cunningham.

execute, and therefore I hope I do not ask too much, my Lord, in begging a patronage for him.

I do not know how soon his progress will allow him to arrive at Nuneham, but I know his purpose is to reach it in this, the painter's month, and if four months of deluge bid one expect four weeks of good weather, he may see Nuneham in all its autumnal charms: a month sooner, he would only have painted pictures for Noah's new house after the Flood.

I have the honour to be, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,

ORFORD.

2590. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 8, 1792.

OH! Madam, your Ladyship, and even I, did not wait for my own favourite echo. I did stay before I replied, till I was certain of the capture of Dumouriez's army. Alas! echo has responsed in a very different tone! It is the Duke of Brunswick who has retired! What a thunder-clap! The cannibals triumph, and unless they devour one another, behold a republic of 20,000,000 of assassins! This retreat is so astonishing, that one can only stare! How unlike to his campaign in Holland! What massacres may it not produce in France, and what mischiefs in Europe! Even that wretch, Philippe l'Egalite, will triumph, and be proud of the trousers he wears, that he may be *sans culottes.*

I have seen the Duchesse de Fleury, who is much the prettiest Frenchwoman I ever beheld. Though little, and more than nut-brown, she is perfect of her size, with very fine eyes and nose, and a most beautiful mouth and teeth, and natural colour. She is but two and twenty, very lively, and very sensible. I could not help describing her, she struck me so much; but I mentioned her because she told me she lived close to the Abbaie, and heard the cries and groans of 120 priests that were butchered there: what will become of her and all the fugitives! She gave a watch of thirty guineas for a passport to the director of the municipality; for their thirst for blood *can* be staunched by their thirst of gain; and one may trust that thirst of power and of gain will whet their daggers against one another.

You are in the right, Madam, not to wade into your forest.

Though the rain is abated, the sun has not dried his rays, for he has not appeared even in his usual October.

I know not a syllable of English news; and am afraid of going to Richmond to see the poor French colony since this fatal piece of news.—What an era! Adieu, Madam. Your Ladyship's most devoted.

2591. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Sunday night late, Oct. 14, 1792.

I HAVE been two or three times going to answer your letter, Madam, but what can I say that you have not thought, or conjectured? And of news I know not a tittle. The French mail was yesterday thought to be stopped, and to-day the eternal rain has prevented my seeing anybody but Mrs. Damer, who came from Goodwood, and has left me. Nor am I impatient to learn what cannot be good—whence can good come *now?* The dragon's teeth are drawn and on the ground, but will not produce new armed men! I wish I could avoid thinking, for I hate to wade into new chaos, or form fresh conjectures, after being so wofully disappointed in the most promising—or why should I? It is no longer probable that I should live to see but a short way into the confusions that may open. May I be deceived on one hand, as I have been on the other! Whether there have been quarrels, treachery, ignorance, folly, or sheer misfortune, how can I pretend to know? Who will own any but the last? And when so many thousands are interested to propagate falsehood, and so many more will coin their own guesses into assertions, or affirm from the slightest authorities, simple as I sit here, I must wait for facts, for reason, I am sure, cannot help one.

I have heard what your Ladyship hints about Ireland, and think the proceeding most abominable and most absurd, and far more likely to bring on the mischief they pretend to apprehend. The Dissenters will embrace the Catholics there, though persecuting and decrying them here. I differ so much from the remonstrants, that I should have thought it wise in government to disperse the poor fugitive priests amongst their Irish brethren, to exhibit and detail their own woes and sufferings, and warn the Catholics against aiding the Dissenters to demolish all government, all religion, and all professions—indeed, everything! For the French priests, I own

I honour them—they preferred beggary to perjury, and have died, or fled to preserve the integrity of their consciences. It certainly was not the French clergy, but the philosophers, that have trained up their countrymen to be the most bloody monsters upon earth. To the persecuted priest, I am half ready to say with Felix, "almost thou persuadest me to be—a Catholic."

Now I am forced by the subject to turn to what is ludicrous, Lord Cliefden's fraction of a subscription—surely the Duchess must have dictated it, or nobly given some old quarter moidores that would not go. I have reserved my donation for the second subscription, for charity is apt to cool before the second call, and then the second may be wanted, and the first has been noble and ample.

I did not mention Miss Knight's 'Marcus Flaminius' to your ladyship *because* it is dedicated to me, and my very just commendation of it would have looked like vanity, at least like partiality—since I must name it, I do protest I think it a wonderful performance. There is so much learning and good sense well digested, such exact knowledge of Roman characters and manners, and the barbarian simplicity so well painted and made so interesting, that it is impossible not to admire the judgment and excellent understanding of the authoress, though as a novel, which it can scarce be called, it is not very amusing. There is an old Gothic chieftain, whose story is very affecting; and there is a Greek who, you will find, Madam, is the most faulty part of the book, *though well levelled*, but he achieves extreme improbabilities—I will not forestall how. I ought not to omit how Roman the style is, without pedantry. You will wonder, Madam, how the book came to be addressed to me by a lady I never saw, and barely knew existed in Italy by hearing Miss Berry talk of a mad Lady Knight, with a learned daughter there. Last winter Lord Aylesbury brought me the MS., begged I would read it, and give him my opinion of it, which I was most unwilling to undertake. Yet as his Lordship has at different times, though little acquainted with him, shown me much partiality and many civilities, I could not refuse. I did read, and was so surprised at a work so far above what I expected, that I declared my approbation in strong terms. I was much more astonished when his Lordship said, that if I liked it, he was commissioned to ask my consent to its being dedicated to me. I pleaded every argument I could devise against such a destination. At last I thought of one that seemed infallible *vis-à-vis* a favourite servant of the Queen. I said Miss Knight was such an honour to her sex, that 'Flaminius'

deserved the patronage of her Majesty. Alas, Miss Knight had already enjoyed that honour—I suppose through the same godfather—she had written a sequel to 'Rasselas,' and it had the Queen's sanction—I had no subterfuge left.

Monday noon.

The newspaper is just arrived as the post is going out, and has brought such a load of bad news, and I know nothing else, that this time I *will* wait for the echo—adieu! Madam.

2592. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 29, 1792.

I DID conclude, Madam, that the gloomy complexion of the times was the cause of your Ladyship's silence, as it has been of mine. Not possessing Ovid's flow of expression, I cannot vary my phrases *de Tristibus;* and my reasoning and experience have been so baffled for these last three months, that I scarce allow myself to form a conjecture; and if I do, I resolve not to vent it; but to compose my patience, and wait—not only for events, but for their confirmation, as truth seems to have taken flight, as much as common sense, and, which I regret still more, humanity! Was it possible to imagine that philosophy was to plunge the dagger into the entrails of civilisation; and that assassination was to grow contagious? This is such a bloody anatomy of human nature, and unfolds such horrid seeds in its darkest recesses, that from thinking ill of this or that nation, I am driven to shudder for our species, and if I could be content with the speculation, would fain persuade myself that some blasting influence has blown over Europe, and that the plague has assumed a new modification. But this is a rhapsody breathed from the shocks my feelings have received.—When I cool, I have better hopes. I trust that the abominable have rashly let out indications of their intentions. I did not doubt but that their secret machinations were eager and industrious, and I feared they would not appear openly, till fully prepared. I feared, too, that despondency prevailed—but, as evident symptoms of what has been meditated have appeared, I trust a firm spirit is arising, and that men will be prepared to meet the danger with courage and resolution. Dejection is the colour that must encourage the evil-minded. This is a brief abstract, Madam, of my thoughts; whole pages more would but

turn on the same axis; and I am too weary of my own thoughts to have pleasure in spreading them on paper.

I am still here, and very well. The weather, which your Ladyship dislikes, has been so mild here, after the worst of all summers, that whole November has appeared to me delightful; and if December is not worse tempered, I shall not think of removing to London yet, where I have outlived most of my particular acquaintance, and I cannot form new amongst those whom I cannot meet till midnight. I have here society enough around me, and at home I have always amusements. In town I have nothing to employ me, nor anything I wish to do.

I remember the St. Legers your Ladyship recollects, but know nothing of the present breed.

I am sorry you are so little satisfied with 'Marcus Flaminius:' it has faults, yet I own I thought it would have been more successful. Perhaps in the former part of my letter I may have been talking what will look like sense, as it coincides with your Ladyship's sentiments. I have now a mind, according to my old propensity, to utter a little nonsense; and what is more foolish than to prophecy? In short, from much meditation on the present aspect of the world, and from looking a good deal forwarder than the actual conflict of chaos, and its settlement into the Lord knows what—but subside at last the jarring elements of anarchy must—I have taken it into my head that some totally new religion will start up. The crimes and distresses of mankind will fit them for receiving some new impression, if violent and novel enough; and when they have had all morality and justice eradicated out of their hearts, and shall find that promised liberty and equality have made them but more uncomfortable than they were, with the additional load of guilt on their consciences, they will listen to any new-fashioned plan of repentance, and still more readily to any new-built paradise that will compensate for the destruction of all that was desirable on the present earth. Having no system ready to offer to the world, and being quite content with the honour of prediction, I shall take my leave of your Ladyship, trusting that you will feel a little obliged to me for having selected you for the first communication of my 'Novum Organum,' which, like Lord Bacon's, will certainly be dilated by future projectors, though without the credit of original discovery.

Yours, &c., ORFORD.

2593. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 7, 1792.

YOUR Ladyship has made me smile beyond my Lord Chesterfield's allowed simper, by sending me to take my seat in the House of Lords out of tenderness for my character; if serious, I should not doubt your sincerity; but as you can look grave and soften your voice, when you have a mind to banter your friends, I rather think you were willing to try whether I have the lurking vanity of supposing myself of any importance. Indeed I have not; on the contrary, I know that having determined never to take that unwelcome seat, I should only make myself ridiculous, by fancying it could *signify* a straw whether I take it or not. If I have anything of character, it must dangle on my being consistent. I quitted and abjured Parliament near thirty years ago: I never repented, and I will not contradict myself now. It is not in the House of Lords that I will *rise* again; I will keep my dry bones for the general review day. A good lady last year was delighted at my becoming a peer, and said "I hope you will get an Act of Parliament for putting down Faro." As if *I* could make Acts of Parliament! and could I, it would be very consistent too in me, who for some years played more at Faro than anybody.

A wholesome spirit is arisen, and no wonder. The French have given warnings enough to property to put it on its guard. I have been too precipitate in my predictions, and therefore am cautious of conjecturing; yet, if my reasoning was too quick, it was not ill-founded; and as famine is striding over France, delusion's holiday will stop short, and give place to bitter scenes at its native home, which may save Europe from returning to primitive desolation. Abominable as the government of France was, it is plain that speculative philosophers were the most unfit of all men to produce a salutary reformation. The French, by antecedent, as well as by recent proofs, have never been fit to be *unchained at once*, so innate is their savage barbarity. What ignorance of human nature to proclaim to twenty-four millions of people, that all laws are impositions; and what medium have those mad dictators been able to find between laws and the violence of force? They will experience the reign of the latter; and perhaps go through all the revolutions of

military despotism that have afflicted Egypt for so many ages. If my memory does not fail me, the *shepherd* kings of that country, who I suppose were *philosophers*, were the first tyrants deposed. Accustomed to cut the throats of their sheep, and versed in nothing but star-gazing, and hoisted from poverty to power, I do not wonder they applied their butchering knife to their subjects, and massacred away, that the rest of their people and flocks might have fairer equality of pasture. Condorcet is just such a shepherd.

The City of London does not seem at all disposed to be reformed by the *Academies de Sciences et de Belles Lettres*. I always thought those tribunals most impertinent; but did not just conceive that they would spawn legions of Huns and Vandals; but extremes meet, and incense and assassination have sprung out of the same dunghill! The servility and gross adulation of that nation persuaded their kings that they were all wise and omnipotent; and their kings being but men, and *French men*, no wonder they were intoxicated and arrogant. Is not Dumouriez already a sketch of Louis Quatorze? And is not every brawler in the National Assembly as vain and insolent as Marshal Villars who, though having witnessed all the victories and modesty of the Duke of Marlborough, plumed himself more on one very inferior combat, gained after Marlborough was withdrawn, than our hero did after years of success!

Knowing a little of human nature, as I have lived to do, and how unfit one man or all are to be trusted with unlimited power (and consequently I remain neither a royalist nor a republican), I must admire our own constitution, that invented, or rather has formed, three powers, which battling one another with opinions, not with force, are more likely to keep the balance fluctuating than to make one scale preponderate by flinging the sword, like Brennus the Gaul, into the one that he chose should be the heaviest.

I wish there were any other topic of discourse than politics; but as one can hear, one can talk nor think on anything else. It has pervaded all ranks and ages. A miss, not fourteen, asked Miss Agnes Berry lately whether she was aristocrat or democrat? And a waiter at the "Toy," at Hampton Court, said of a scraper at the last ball, that he had a fine finger on the organization of a violin. It is provoking that we should catch even their fashionable and absurd pedantry. Adieu! Madam!

2594. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 8, 1793.

I RETURN your Ladyship's kind wishes for the new year; and may it prove more felicitous to mankind, as well as to us individuals, than the last bloody months have been—not that I could feel commiseration for hosts of assassins, were the hour of punishment and retribution to arrive before this time twelvemonth. Orleans, Condorcet, and such monsters—for oh! there are many almost as execrable—have dammed up every vein that would have throbbed; if they were doomed to execution, I should not feel for Marats and Robespierres; yet they were only low natural Frenchmen, and only wanted to be invited to massacre their countrymen. It is those on whom heaven had showered its best blessings and gifts, whom I abhor for their cool, premeditated, cowardly crimes. Mr. Crawfurd has brought over tales of new horrors. They now seize the estates of those they have butchered, as of Monsieur de Clermont, and say they do not know of their being dead, but believe they are *emigrés*. Condorcet, who is believed to have suggested, or been dipped, in the murder of the Duc de la Rochfoucauld, had fallen in love with a girl without a fortune, and whom he could not afford to marry; the Duchesse d'Anville, mother of the Duc, gave him a hundred thousand livres, that he might marry her, as he did. I should not believe this charge, if Condorcet, in the National Assembly, had not said, on their receiving a present of a bust of Brutus, "why send us a head of Brutus? We do not want that; why not rather give us a bust of Ankerstrom?" The basest of all assassins, who loaded his pistol with crooked nails! Can the extremest credulity of charity haggle about believing any villany of such a fiend?

To complete the *trium diaboliad* of Ankerstrom and Condorcet, hear the claim of Orleans. Ten days ago General Conway dined at Lord Rawdon's with the Prince of Wales, the Abbés de *St. Far* and St. Alban, natural brothers of Orleans, Monsieur de Bouillé and his son, and other French, some of whom told this anecdote; that early in the revolution Orleans was concerting a plan for the murder of the king. One of the company said, "but, sir, you will certainly be detected." "No," said Beelzebub, "for I will have *St. Far* stabbed too, and nobody will suspect me of being concerned in the murder of my own brother too." The two brothers neither con-

tradicted the story, nor seemed sorry it was told; nor, doubtless, would it have been related in their presence, unless it had been certain that they would not be offended. Pray observe, Madam, that I never call his serene highness *Égalité*, for that pretended humility is presumption. *He* can have no equal, who is below all mankind.

I less wonder at their atheism than at all the rest; such infernals can believe in no hell, unless, like Belphegor, they came thence themselves.

If my mind broils with detestation, it has room left for admiration too. The poor King I have long thought the best-natured and most inoffensive of men; and what a recompense for restoring the ancient parliaments, without which he might have remained despotic to this hour! On that recall somebody wrote under the statue of Henry Quatre, on the *Pont Neuf*, this beautiful word, *Resurrexit*. Henry was stabbed in the midst of that vile town. *Resurrexit* is forgot, and Louis has been tortured for above three years, and may be torn to pieces in the same shambles!

For the Queen, she has passed a like succession of ordeals, and come out whiter than snow. Though three National Inquisitions have had the members and papers of the *Châtelet*, and all evidences living or written in their hands; though every page and chamber-maid of the unfortunate Antoinette has been in their power too, with the use of torture too, has a single stain been fixed on her—though scandal had spared none! I will not turn my eyes homewards, as I wish such scenes should be unparalleled out of France. But alas! have we not hands amongst us that have been ready to grasp daggers likewise?

Lord Edward is certainly married to Pamela, and Mrs. Genlis, *alias* Sillery, *alias* Brulart, as she would be styled at the Old Bailey, is going to live with them in Ireland. Did you hear Lord Darnley's answer to Lord Henry, who told him he had expunged his supporters on his chariot, and asked, "if he would not do so too?" "No," said Lord Darnley, "I would not blot out my supporters, unless they were *monkeys*"—the real supporters of the Fitzgeralds—how lucky!

Of my own health, I thank your ladyship, I have no reason to complain: I slept last night near ten hours, though three times twenty-five years of age; is not that being well enough? I hope you and yours, Madam, will be wished happy new years at as late a period!

2595. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

My holy Hannah, *Berkeley Square, Feb.* 9, 1793.

With your innate and usual goodness and sense, you have done me justice by guessing exactly at the cause of my long silence. You have been apt to tell me that my letters diverted you. How then could I write, when it was impossible but to attrist you! when I could speak of nothing but unparalleled horrors! and but awaken your sensibility, if it slumbered for a moment! What mind could forget the 10th of August and the 2d of September; and that the black and bloody year 1792 has plunged its murderous dagger still deeper, and already made 1793 still more detestably memorable! though its victim has at last been rewarded for four years of torture by forcing from him every kind of proof of the most perfect character that ever sat on a throne. Were these, alas! themes for letters? Nay, am I not sure that *you* have been still more shocked by a crime that passes even the guilt of shedding the blood of poor Louis, to hear of atheism avowed, and the avowal tolerated by monsters calling themselves a National Assembly! But I have no words that can reach the criminality of such *inferno-human* beings, but must compose a term that aims at conveying my idea of them. For the future it will be sufficient to call them *the French;* I hope no other nation will ever deserve to be confounded with them!

Indeed, my dear friend, I have another reason for wishing to burn my pen entirely: all my ideas are confounded and overturned; I do not know whether all I ever learned in the seventy-first years of my seventy-five was not wrong and false: common sense, reasoning, calculation, conjecture from analogy and from history of past events, all, all have been baffled; nor am I sure that what used to be thought the result of experience and wisdom was not a mass of mistakes. Have I not found, do I not find, that the invention of establishing metals as the *signs* of property was an useless discovery, or at least only useful till the art of making paper was found out? Nay, the latter is preferable to gold and silver. If the ores were adulterated and cried down, nobody would take them in exchange. Depreciate paper as much as you will, and it will still serve all the purposes of barter. Tradesmen still keep shops, stock them with goods, and deliver their commodities for those coined rags Poor Reason, where art thou?

To show you that memory and argument are of no value, at least with me, I thought a year or two that this paper-mint would soon blow up, because I remembered that when Mr. Charles Fox and one or two more youths of brilliant genius first came to light, and into vast debts at play, they imparted to the world an important secret which they had discovered. It was, that nobody needed to want money, if they would pay enough for it. Accordingly, they borrowed of Jews at vast usury; but as they had made but an incomplete calculation, the interest so soon exceeded the principal, that the system did not maintain its ground for above two or three years. Faro has proved a more substantial speculation. But I miscarried in applying my remembrance to the Assignats, which still maintain their ground against that long-decried but as long-adored corrupter of virtue, gold. Alack! I do not hear that virtue has flourished more for the destruction of its old enemy!

Shall I add another truth? I have been so disgusted and fatigued by hearing of nothing but French massacres, &c. and found it so impossible to shift conversation to any other topic, that before I had been a month in town, I wished Miss Gunning would revive, that people might have at least one other subject to interest the ears and tongues of the public. But no wonder universal attention is engrossed by the present portentous scene! It seems to draw to a question, whether Europe or France is to be depopulated; whether civilisation can be recovered, or the republic of Chaos can be supported by assassination. We have heard of the golden, silver, and iron ages; the brazen one existed, while the French were only predominantly insolent. What the present age will be denominated, I cannot guess. Though the paper age would be characteristic, it is not emphatic enough, nor specifies the enormous sins of the fiends that are the agents. I think it may be styled the diabolic age: the Duke of Orleans has dethroned Satan, who since his fall has never instigated such crimes as Orleans has perpetrated.

Let me soften my tone a little, and harmonise your poor mind by sweeter accents. In this deluge of triumphant enormities, what traits of the sublime and beautiful may be gleaned! Did you hear of Madame Elizabeth, the King's sister? a saint like yourself. She doted on her brother, for she certainly knew his soul. In the tumult in July, hearing the populace and the poissardes had broken into the palace, she flew to the King, and by embracing him tried to shield his person. The populace took her for the Queen, cried out "Voilà cette chienne, cette Autrichienne!" and were proceed-

ing to violence. Somebody, to save her, screamed "Ce n'est pas la Reine, c'est——." The Princess said, "Ah! mon Dieu! ne les détrompez pas." If that was not the most sublime instance of perfect innocence ready prepared for death, I know not where to find one. Sublime indeed, too, was the sentence of good Father Edgeworth, the King's confessor, who, thinking his royal penitent a little dismayed just before the fatal stroke, cried out, "Montez, digne fils de St. Louis! Le ciel vous est ouvert." The holy martyr's countenance brightened up, and he submitted at once. Such victims, such confessors as those, and Monsieur de Malesherbes, repair some of the breaches in human nature made by Orleans, Condorcet, Santerre, and a legion of evil spirits.

The tide of horrors has hurried me much too far, before I have vented a note of my most sincere concern for your bad account of your health. I feel for it heartily, and wish your frame were as sound as your soul and understanding. What can I recommend? I am no physician but for my own flimsy texture; which, by studying, and by contradicting all advice, I have drawn to this great age. Patience, temperance, nay, abstinence, are already yours; in short, you want to be corrected of nothing but too much piety, too much rigour towards yourself, and too much sensibility for others. Is not it possible to serve mankind, without feeling too great pity? Perhaps I am a little too much hardened, I am grown too little alarmed for the health of my friends, from being become far more indifferent to life; I look to the nearness of my end, as a delivery from spectacles of woe. We have even amongst us monsters, more criminal, in speculation at least, than the French. They had cause to wish for correction of a bad government; though, till *taught* to dislike it, three-fourths of the country, I maintain, adored theirs. We have the perfectest ever yet devised; but if to your numerous readings of little pamphlets you would add one more, called 'Village Politics,'[1] infinitely superior to anything on the subject, clearer, better stated, and comprehending the whole mass of matter in the shortest compass, you will be more mistress of the subject than any man in England. I know who wrote it, but will not tell you, because you did not tell me

[1] A little work which Miss More had just published anonymously. The sale of it was enormous. Many thousands were sent by government to Scotland and Ireland. Several persons printed large editions of it at their own expense, and in London only many hundred thousands were circulated.—Wright.

2596. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Berkeley Square, March 23, 1793.

I SHALL certainly not leave off taunting your virtues, my excellent friend, for I find it sometimes makes you correct them. I scolded you for your modesty in not acquainting me with your 'Village Politics' even after they were published; and you have already conquered that unfriendly delicacy, and announced another piece of which you are in labour. Still I see there wanted your ghostly father, the Bishop of London [Porteus], to enjoin you to be *quite* shameless and avow your natural child.[1] I do approve his doctrine: calling it by your own name will make its fortune. If, like Rousseau, you had left your babe among the *enfans trouvés*, it might never be heard of more than his poor issue have been; for I can but observe that the French patriots, who have made such a fuss with his ashes, have not taken the smallest pains to attempt to discover his real progeny, which might not have been impossible by collating dates and circumstances. I am proud of having imitated you at a great distance, and been persuaded, much against my will and practice, to let my name be put to the second subscription for the poor French clergy, as it was thought it might tend to animate that consumptive contribution.

I am impatient for your pamphlet, not only as being yours, but hoping it will invigorate horror against French atheism, which I am grieved to say did not by any means make due impression. I did very early apply to *your confessor*, to beg he would enjoin his clergy to denounce that shocking impiety; I could almost recommend to you to add a slight postscript on the massacre of that wretch Manuel. I do not love such insects as we are dispensing *judgments;* yet, if the punishment of that just victim might startle such profane criminals, it might be charity to suggest the hint to them.

24*th.*

I must modify the massacre of Manuel; he has been a good deal stabbed, but will, they say, recover. Perhaps it is better that some

[1] Miss More had informed Walpole that she was occupied in writing her 'Remarks' on the atheistical speech of M. Dupont, made in the National Convention, and to which the Bishop of London had recommended her to put her name.—WRIGHT.

of those assassins should live to acknowledge, that "Do not to others what you would not have done to you," is not so silly a maxim as most of the precepts of morality and justice have lately been deemed by *philosophers and legislators*—titles self-assumed by men who have abolished all other titles; and who have disgraced and debased the former denomination, and under the latter have enjoined triple perjuries, and at last cannot fix on any code which should exact more forswearing. I own I am pleased that that ruffian pedant Condorcet's new constitution was too clumsy and unwieldy to go down the throats of those who have swallowed everything else. I did but just cast my eyes on the beginning and end, and was so lucky as to observe the hypocrite's contradiction: he sets out with declaration of equality, and winds up with security of property; that is, we will plunder everybody, and then entail the spoils on ourselves and our (*wrong*) heirs.

Well! that bloody chaos seems recoiling on themselves! It looks as if civil war was bursting out in many provinces, and will precipitate approaching famine. When, till *now*, could one make such a reflection without horror to one's self? But, alas! have not the French brought it to the question, whether Europe or France should be laid desolate? Religion, morality, justice, have been stabbed, torn up by the roots: every right has been trampled under foot. Marriage has been profaned and undermined by law; and no wonder, that amidst such excesses, the poor arts have shared in the common ruin! And who have been the perpetrators of, or advocates for, such universal devastation? Philosophers, geometricians, astronomers—a Condorcet, a Bailly, a Bishop of Autun, and a Doctor Priestley,[1] and the last the worst. The French had seen grievances, crying grievances! yet not under the good late King. But what calamities or dangers threatened or had fallen on Priestley, but want of papal power, like his predecessor Calvin? If you say his house was burnt—but did he intend the fire should blaze on that side of the street? *Your* charity may believe him innocent, but your understanding does not. Well! I am glad to

[1] "I have read a communication from George III. to one of his ministers, on the subject of the riots in which Priestley's house was burned. His Majesty says, in his short emphatic way, that the riots must be stopped *immediately;* that no man's house must be left in peril; and then he orders the march of certain troops, &c., to restore peace; and concludes with saying, that as the mischief did occur, it was impossible not to be pleased at its having fallen on Priestley rather than another, that he might *feel* the wickedness of the doctrines of democracy which he was propagating." *Croker* (*MS.*).—CUNNINGHAM.

hear he is going to America; I hope he will not bring back scalping, even to that National Assembly of which he was proud of being elected a member! I doubt if Cartouche would have thought it an honour. It was stuck up in Lloyd's coffee-house lately, that the Duke of Orleans was named "Chef de la République." I thought it should be "Chef de la Lie publique."

2597. TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, June 13, 1793.

I THANK you much for all your information—some parts made me smile; yet, if what you heard of your brother proves true, I rather think it deplorable! How can love of money, or the still vainer of all vanities, ambition of wearing a high but most insignificant office, which even poor Lord Salisbury could execute, tempt a very old man, who loves his ease and his own way, to stoop to wait like a footman behind a chair, for hours, and in a court whence he had been cast ignominiously? I believe I have more pride than most men alive: I could be flattered by honours acquired by merit, or by some single action of *éclat;* but for titles, ribands, offices of no business, which anybody can fill, and must be given to many, I should just as soon be proud of being the top 'squire in a country village.[1] It is only worse to have waded to distinction through dirt, like Lord Auckland.[2]

All this shifting of scenes may, as you say, be food to the *Fronde* —*Sed defendit numerus.* It is perfectly ridiculous to use any distinction of parties but the *ins* and the *outs.* Many years ago I thought that the wisest appellations for contending factions ever assumed, were those in the Roman empire, who called themselves *the greens* and *the blues:* it was so easy, when they changed sides, to slide from one colour to the other; and then a blue might plead that he had never been *true blue,* but always a *greenish blue;* and *vice versâ.* I allow that the steadiest party-man may be staggered by novel and unforeseen circumstances. The outrageous proceedings of the French republicans have wounded the cause of liberty, and will, I fear, have shaken it for centuries; for Condorcet and such fiends

[1] On the 29th of this month, the Earl of Hertford was created a Marquis. He died on the 14th of June, in the following year, at the age of seventy-five.—WRIGHT.

[2] On the 28rd of May, William Eden, Lord Auckland, had been created an English peer.—WRIGHT.

are worse than the imperial and royal dividers of Poland. But I do not see why detestation of anarchy and assassination must immediately make one fall in love with garters and seals.

I am sitting by the fire, as I have done ever since I came hither; and since I do not expect warm weather in June, I am wishing for rain, or I shall not have a mouthful of hay, nor a noseful of roses. Indeed, as I have seen several fields of hay cut, I wonder it has not brought rain, as usual. My creed is, that rain is good for hay, as I conclude every climate and its productions are suited to each other. Providence did not trouble itself about its being more expensive to us to make our hay over and over; it only took care it should not want water enough. Adieu!

2598. TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Wednesday night, late, July 17, 1793.

I AM just come from dining with the Bishop of London [Porteus] at Fulham, where I found Lord and Lady Frederick Campbell, who told me of the alarm you had from hearing some screams that you thought Lady Ailesbury's, and the disorder brought upon you by flying to assist her. I do not at all wonder at your panic, and rejoice it was not founded, and that you recovered so soon. I am not going to preach against your acting so naturally: but as you have some complaint on your breast, I must hope you will remember this accident, and be upon your guard against both sudden and rapid exertions, when you have not a tantamount call. I conclude the excessive heat we have had for twelve complete days contributed to overpower you.

It is much cooler to-day, yet still delicious; for be it known to you that I have enjoyed weather worthy of Africa, and yet without swallowing mouthfuls of muskitos, nor expecting to hear hyænas howl in the village, nor to find scorpions in my bed. Indeed, all the way I came home, I could but gaze at the felicity of my countrymen. The road was one string of stage-coaches loaded within and without with noisy jolly folks, and chaises and gigs that had been pleasuring in clouds of dust; every door and every window of every house was open, lights in every shop, every door with women sitting in the street, every inn crowded with jaded horses, and every ale-house full of drunken topers; for you know the English always announce their sense of heat or cold by drinking. Well! it was impossible not to

enjoy such a scene of happiness and affluence in every village, and amongst the lowest of the people; and who are told by villanous scribblers, that they are oppressed and miserable. New streets, new towns, are rising every day and everywhere; the earth is covered with gardens and crops of grain.

How bitter to turn from this Elysium to the Temple at Paris! The fiends there have now torn her son from the Queen! Can one believe that they are human beings, who 'midst all their confusions sit coolly meditating new tortures, new anguish for that poor, helpless, miserable woman, after four years of unexampled sufferings? Oh! if such crimes are not made a dreadful lesson, this world might become a theatre of cannibals!

I hope the checks in Bretagne are legends coined by miscreants at Paris. What can one believe? Well, I will go to bed, and try to dream of peace and plenty; and though my lawn is burnt, and my peas and beans, and roses and strawberries parched, I will bear it with patience till the harvest is got in. Saint Swithin can never hold his water for forty days, though he can do the contrary. Good-night!

2599. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 6, 1793.

I WAS not sorry, Madam, at not hearing from your Ladyship for some time, as I was totally unable to have answered you with my own hand, and not much more capable of dictating to Kirgate. I have been very ill with the gout for above a month: it began in my right hand, a middle finger of which opened, and discharged a sharp-pointed chalk-stone, that literally weighs four grains and a half; but it is quite healed, and as you see I am writing with it. It was more provoking that the left hand, that had nothing to do in the quarrel, would meddle too, yes, and produce chalk from the middle finger likewise, but scarce having wherewithal revenged itself upon the whole hand, wrist, elbow, and shoulder, on that side; and it was but this morning that I moulted my bootikin, and could get on a warm glove.

These are the miserable anecdotes of the prison-house of your correspondent, Madam! Judge then if I can make any other reply to your kind invitation to Houghton Ampthill, but that I am not likely to make any more journeys but my last! A travelling quarry would be a great natural curiosity—but I am not ambitious

of being recorded in the Philosophical Transactions—my executors, if they please, may contribute a print of my singular specimen of chalk.

For the sake of others I am sorry that pretty outside is demolished, and that Mr. Holland has so much of the spirit of a lucrative profession in him, as to prefer destroying to not being employed.

The portrait, shooting with a cross-bow, I should rather suppose, not having seen it,[1] to represent Prince Henry than King James. The prince is often drawn as using some activity. There are two pictures of him, one at St. James's[2] and the other at Lord Guildford's, at Wroxton, where with Lord Harrington of Exton, he has just killed a deer. At the other painting it is impossible I should guess; and if it exhibits any of Dente's extravagances, I wish not to see it.

The letter, which I return, by the help of Mr. Lysons the divine, who is with me to-day, I can inform your Ladyship is a most insignificant, grandmotherly epistle to Lord Bruce (afterwards first Earl of Ailesbury), from his Grannum Magdalen daughter of Sir Alexander Clarke, and talks of his lady mother, and lady aunt, and of his tutor, though he had a lady wife.

Of the nation of infernal monsters I desire to talk no more than your Ladyship. Would I could avoid thinking on them! Oh! what would I not give to hear the Queen was dead without being murdered!

An account is come of the sudden death of Lord Buckinghamshire: he had the gout in his foot, dipped it in cold water, and killed himself; nobody can play such tricks with impunity but I. Mrs. Hobart is now Countess, with a coronet I believe little gilt: Norfolk-coronets scarce pay for the fashion.

I have railed at our summers to your Ladyship: this has been a superb one, and has constantly, contrary to the practice of its predecessors, recovered its temper instantly after the hardest showers of rain; consequently the verdure and leafage are in the highest perfection: my eyes have been delighted, though my limbs suffered; one must comfort one's self with what one can. I hope you have no occasion, Madam, to search for succedaneums!

[1] This picture taken from Houghton is still at Ampthill Park.—R. Vernon Smith
[2] Now at Hampton Court.—Cunningham.

2600. TO THE MISS BERRYS.[1]

My beloved Spouses, *Tuesday night, 8 o'clock, Sept. 17, 1793.*

Whom I love better than Solomon loved his one spouse—or his one thousand. I lament that the summer is over; not because of its uniquity, but because you two made it so delightful to me, that six weeks of gout could not sour it. Pray take care of yourselves, not for your own sakes, but for mine; for, as I have just had my quota of gout, I may, possibly, expect to see another summer; and, as you allow that I do know my own mind, and when I wish for anything and have it, am entirely satisfied, you may depend upon it that I shall be as happy with a third summer, if I reach it, as I have been with the two last.

Consider, that I have been threescore years and ten looking for a society that I perfectly like; and at last there dropped out of the clouds into Lady Herries's room two young gentlewomen, who I so little thought were sent thither on purpose for me, that when I was told they were the charming Miss Berrys, I would not even go to the side of the chamber where they sat. But, as Fortune never throws anything at one's head without hitting one, I soon found that the charming Berrys were precisely *ce qu'il me fallait;* and that though young enough to be my great-grand-daughters, lovely enough to turn the heads of all our youths, and sensible enough, if said youths have any brains, to set all their heads to rights again. Yes, sweet damsels, I have found that you can bear to pass half your time with an ante-diluvian, without discovering any *ennui* or disgust; though his greatest merit towards you is, that he is not one of those old fools who fancy they are in love in their dotage. I have no such vagary; though I am not sorry that some folks think I am so absurd, since it frets their selfishness. The Mackinsys, Onslows, Miss Pelham, and Madame de Cambis have dined here; and to-morrow I shall have the Hamptonians and other Richmondists. I must repeat it; keep in mind that both of you are delicate, and not strong. If you return in better health, I shall not repine at your journey. Good night!

[1] The Miss Berrys were at this time in Yorkshire.—Wright.

2601. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Wednesday, 3 o'clock, Sept. 25, 1793.

EVERYTHING has gone *au mieux*. The rain vented itself to the last drop yesterday; and the sun, as bright as the Belvidere, has not had a wrinkle on his brow since eight o'clock this morning; nay, he has been warm, and gilded the gallery and tribune with sterling rays; the Thames quite full with the last deluges, and the verdure never fresher since it was born. The Duchess of York arrived punctually at twelve, in a high phaeton, with Mrs. Ewert and Bude on horseback. On the step of the gate was a carpet, and the court matted. I received the Princess at the side of her chaise, and, when entered, kissed her hand. She had meant to ride; but had hurt her foot, and was forced to sit most of the time she was here. We had many civil contests about my sitting too; but I resisted, and held out till after she had seen the house and drank chocolate in the round drawing-room; and then she commanded General Bude to sit, that I might have no excuse: yet I rose and fetched a salver, to give her the chocolate myself, and then a glass of water. She seemed much pleased, and commended much; and I can do no less of her, and with the strictest truth. She is not near so small as I had expected; her face is very agreeable and lively; and she is so good-humoured, and so gracious, and so natural, that I do not believe Lady Mary Coke[1] would have made a quarter so pleasing a Duchess of York; nor have been in half so sweet a temper, unless by my attentions *de vieille cour*. I was sorry my Eagle[2] had been forced to hold its tongue. To-morrow I shall go to Oatlands, with my thanks for the honour; and there, probably, will end my connexions with courts, begun with George the First, great-great-great-grandfather to the Duchess of York! It sounds as if there could not have been above three generations more before Adam.

Great news! How eager Mr. Berry will look!—but it is not from armies or navies; not from the murderers at Paris, nor from

[1] Lady Mary Coke, youngest daughter of John Duke of Argyle, married to Lord Coke, eldest son of the Earl of Leicester. After his death she fancied an attachment existed between herself and the Duke of York [died 1767], brother of George the Third; which she likewise *fancied* had ended in an undeclared marriage.—M. B.

[2] The antique marble eagle in the gallery at Strawberry Hill, round the neck of which was to have been suspended some lines which Lord Orford had written, extolling the Duke of York's military fame and conquests in Holland, which the unfortunate issue of the campaign obliged him to suppress.—WRIGHT.

the victims at Grodno. No! it is only an event in the little world of me. This morning, to receive my Princess, I put on a silver waistcoat that I had made three years ago for Lord Cholmondeley's marriage, and have not worn since. Considering my late illness, and how many hundredweight of chalk I have been venting these ten years, I concluded my wedding garment would wrap round me like my night-gown; but, lo! it was grown too tight for me. I shall be less surprised, if, in my next century, and under George the Tenth, I grow as plump as Mrs. Ellis.

Methinks I pity you, when all the world is in arms and you expect to hear that Saul Duke of Brunswick has slain his thousands, and David Prince of Coburg his ten thousands, to be forced to read the platitudes that I send you, because I have nothing better to amuse me than writing to you. Well! you know how to get rid of my letters. Good night. I reckon you are at Brompton,[1] and have had no accidents, I hope, on the road.

2602. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 6, 1793.

You are welcome to Scarborough both, and *buon provifaccia!* As you, Mrs. Mary, have been so mistaken about your sister, I shall allow nobody for the future to take a panic about either, but myself. I am rejoiced the journey seems hitherto to answer so well; but, do you know, "it is very inconvenient to my Lord Castlecomer." I am forced to eat all the game of your purparties, as well as my own thirds.

Pray did not you think that the object of the grand alliance was to reduce France? No such thing! at least their views have changed ever since they heard of your setting out. Without refining too much, it is clear to me that all they think on now, is to prevent my sending you news. Does any army stir? Is not the Duke of Brunswick gone to sleep again, like a paroli at faro, or like a paroli at Torbay, which cocks one corner, but never wins a septleva? That Lord Admiral reminds me of a trait of poor Don Carlos, which helped on his death-warrant. He one day made a little book, which he intituled "The Travels of Philip the Second, King of Spain" It contained his Majesty's removals from his capital to his country palaces, and back again. Well! if all those monarchs are

[1] The seat of Sir George Cayley, Bart., near Scarborough.—Wright.

so pitiful as to set their wits against you, I will balk them. I will do as other folks do; I will make news myself—not to-night; for I have no invention by me at present: besides, you are apt to sift news too shrewdly.

But, before I coin a report for you, I must contradict one. If you should hear in Yorkshire, that I am appointed aide-de-camp to the Duke of York, you may safely contradict it. It could only arise from the Duchess of York's visit to me; just as, the year before you came to Cliveden, your predecessor, Sir Robert Goodere, literally told me, that he *heard* that Princess Elizabeth had been sent to me for two days for the air. On questioning him roundly, I discovered that he had *heard* no such thing; but had conjectured so, on seeing two of the Duchess of Gloucester's servants pass before his door from or to the Pavilions [at Hampton Court]; which ought not to have puzzled the goose's imagination a moment—but thus reports originate!

Monday night, 7th Oct.

I come from Mrs. Jeffries at Richmond, but return not a battle richer than I went; though I saw the Secretary-at-War[1] there, and even the Panic-master-general, who had not a single alarm to bestow on a poor soul who is hungering and thirsting for news, good or bad, to send to you. Sir George Yonge, indeed, did tell us, that thirty Jacobins, who had disguised themselves as priests, to bring scandal on their countrymen of that profession, but who, the Bishop of Leon declares, are none of their clergy, have been detected and seized, and are to be sent away to-morrow. Home news from Richmond. Your friend Mr. Dundas was robbed this morning at eleven o'clock at Cranford-bridge. He happened to tell them he is a surgeon; on which they insisted on his giving them his case of instruments. I suspect they are French surgeons, and will poison the instruments for the first wound they dress. You see how I labour in your service, though my crops are small. An old Duchess of Rutland, mother of the late Duchess of Montrose,[2] whenever a visitor told her some news or scandal, cried to her daughter, "Lucy, do step into next room, and make a memorandum of what Lady Greenwich, or Lady M.M. or N.N. has been telling us." "Lord! Madam, to be sure it cannot be true." "No matter, child; it will do for news

[1] Sir George Yonge.—WRIGHT.

[2] Lucy, daughter of Bennet, Lord Sherard, Baron of Leitrim, in Ireland, and sister to Bennet Sherard, first Earl of Harborough. She died in 1751, aged sixty-six. There was no Lady Greenwich in the Duke of Rutland's life-time.—CUNNINGHAM.

into the country."[1] It is for want of such prudent *provision pour le couvent*, that so many people are forced to invent off-hand. You cannot say I am so thoughtless: you receive every morsel piping-hot as it comes from the bakers. One word about our glorious weather, and I have done. It even improves every day. I kept the window wide open till dinner-time to-day, and could do nothing but gaze at the brilliant beauty of the verdure. It is so equal to ordinary Julys, that one is surprised to see the sun set before six o'clock. Good night!

2603. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 1793.

Though it would make me happy, my dear Madam, if you were more corresponding, yet I must not reproach your silence, nor wish it were less; for all your moments are so dedicated to goodness, and to unwearied acts of benevolence, that you must steal from charity, or purloin from the repose you want, any that you bestow on me. Do not I know, too, alas! how indifferent your health is? You sacrifice that to your duties: but can a friend, who esteems you so highly as I do, be so selfish as to desire to cost you half an hour's headache? No, never send me a line that you can employ better; that would trespass on your ease.

Of the trash written against you I had never even heard.[2] Nor do I believe that they gave you any other disquiet than what arose from seeing that the worthiest and most *humane* intentions are poison to some human beings. Oh! have not the last five years brought to light such infernal malevolence, such monstrous crimes, as mankind had grown civilised enough to disbelieve when they read anything similar in former ages; if, indeed, anything similar has been recorded. But I must not enter into what I dare not fathom. Catherine Slay-Czar triumphs over the good honest Poles; and Louis Seize perishes on a scaffold, the best of men: while whole assemblies of fiends, calling themselves *men*, are from day to day meditating torment and torture for his heroic widow; on whom, with all their power and malice, and with every page, footman, and chambermaid of hers in

[1] The same saying of "the old Duchess of Rutland" occurs in a letter from Walpole to Lady Hervey, of 28th June, 1766. (See vol. iv. p. 508.)—Cunningham.

[2] Three abusive answers to Miss More's pamphlet against M. Dupont had just been published.—Wright.

their reach, and with the rack in their hands, they have not been able to fix a speck. Nay, do they not talk of the inutility of evidence? What other virtue ever sustained such an ordeal? But who can wonder, when the Almighty himself is called by one of those wretches, the *soi-disant* God.

You say their outrageous folly tempts you to smile[1]—yes, yes: at times I should have laughed too, if I could have dragged my muscles at once from the zenith of horror to the nadir of contempt: but their abominations leave one leisure enough to leap from indignation to mirth. I abhor war and bloodshed as much as you do; but unless the earth is purged of such monsters, peace and morality will never return. This is not a war of nation and nation; it is the cause of everything dear and sacred to civilised man, against the unbounded licentiousness of assassins, who massacre even the generals who fight for them—not that I pity the latter; but to whom can a country be just that rewards its tools with the axe? What animal is so horrible as one that devours its own young ones?

That execrable nation overwhelms all moralising. At any other minute the unexpected death of Lady Falmouth would be striking: yet I am sorry for Mrs. Boscawen. I have been ill for six weeks with the gout, and am just recovered: yet I remember it less than the atrocities of France; and I remember, if possible, with greater indignation, their traitors here at home; amongst whom are your antagonists. Do not apologise for talking of them and yourself. Punish them not by answering, but by supporting the good cause, and by stigmatising the most impudent impiety that ever was avowed.

Mrs. Garrick dined here to-day, with some of the quality of Hampton and Richmond. She appears quite well, and was very cheerful: I wish you were as well recovered. Do you remember how ill I found you both last year in the Adelphi? Adieu! thou excellent champion, as well as practiser, of all goodness. Let the vile abuse vented against you be balm to your mind: your writings must have done great service, when they have so much provoked the enemy. All who have religion or principle must revere your name. Who would not be hated by Duponts and Dantons?—and if abhorrence of atheism implies Popery, reckon it a compliment to be

[1] Miss More had said,—"These mad monkeys of the Convention do contrive to enliven my unappeasable indignation against them with occasional provocatives to mirth. How do you like the egregious inventions of the anniversary follies of the 10th of August."—WRIGHT

called Papist. The French have gone such extravagant lengths, that to preach or practise massacres is, with them, the sole test of merit—of patriotism. Just in one point only they have merit; they sacrifice the blackest criminals with as much alacrity as the most innocent or the most virtuous: but I beg your pardon; I know not how to stop when I talk of these ruffians. Yours, most cordially and most sincerely.

2604. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Tuesday evening, eight o'clock, Oct. 15, 1793.

THOUGH I do not know when it will have its whole lading, I must begin my letter this very moment, to tell you what I have just heard. I called on the Princesse d'Hennin, who has been in town a week. I found her quite alone, and I thought she did not answer quite clearly about her two knights: the Prince de Poix has taken a lodging in town, and she talks of letting her house here, if she can. In short, I thought she had a little of an Ariadne-air—but this was not what I was in such a hurry to tell you. She showed me several pieces of letters, I think from the Duchesse de Bouillon: one says, the poor Duchesse de Biron is again arrested and at the Jacobins,[1] and with her "une jeune étourdie, qui ne fait que chanter toute la journée;" and who, think you, may that be?—only our pretty little wicked Duchesse de Fleury! by her singing and not sobbing, I suppose she was weary of her *Tircis*, and is glad to be rid of him. This new blow, I fear, will overset Madame de Biron again. The rage at Paris seems to increase daily or hourly; they either despair, or are now avowed banditti. I tremble so much for the great and most suffering victim of all, the Queen, that one cannot feel so much for many, as several perhaps deserve: but her tortures have been of far longer duration than any martyrs, and more various; and her courage and patience equal to her woes!

My poor old friend, the Duchesse de la Vallière, past ninety and stone-deaf, has a guard set upon her, but in her own house; her daughter, the Duchesse de Chatillon, mother of the Duchesse de la Tremouille, is arrested; and thus the last, with her attachment to the Queen, must be miserable indeed!—but one would think I feel for nothing but Duchesses: the crisis has crowded them together

[1] The Duchess perished under the guillotine in the following year.—WRIGHT.

into my letter, and into a prison;—and to be a prisoner among cannibals is pitiable indeed!

Thursday morning, 17th, past ten.

I this moment receive the very comfortable twin-letter. I am so conjugal, and so much in earnest upon the article of recovery, that I cannot think of *a pretty thing* to say to very pretty Mrs. Stanhope; nor do I know what would be a pretty thing in these days. I might come out with some old-fashioned compliment, that would have been very genteel

In good Queen Bess's golden day, when I was a dame of honour.

Let Mrs. Stanhope[1] imagine that I have said all she deserves: I certainly think it, and will ratify it, when I have learnt the language of the nineteenth century; but I really am so ancient, that as Pythagoras imagined he had been Panthoides Euphorbus in the Trojan war, I am not sure that I did not ride upon a pillion behind a Gentleman-Usher, when her Majesty Elizabeth went in procession to St. Paul's on the defeat of the Armada! Adieu! the postman puts an end to my idle speculations—but, Scarborough for ever! with three huzzas!

2605. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 2, 1793.

I CERTAINLY, madam, told you nothing about the Queen of France but what you did or might know as well as I, that is from the newspapers, my sole channel of intelligence. How it should be possible for me to tell you any destination on the fate of Madame Elizabeth, I cannot divine: who can do more than guess? And that must be in one of the extremes—no possible reason for murdering her there can be; but as whatever can be conceived of most horrible, is most probable to happen from the frantic fiends at Paris, the more shocking the crime the more it is to be expected, and therefore I beg to say no more on so horrible a subject. I do nothing but try to read whatever I can suppose will lead my thoughts a moment from such detestable scenes.

Your Ladyship knows well how hastily and inconsiderately I write; it is generally as impossible for me to recollect the next day

[1] The wife of Colonel Stanhope, brother of the Earl of Harrington.—WRIGHT

what I have said in a letter of the preceding, as what I wrote a twelvemonth ago. I have been trying to recall what I could say about Richmond Park, and I do suppose that on your telling me of the havoc made round Farming-Woods, I replied that I conceived how I should feel if the wood in the Park was to be cut down.

Lady Waldegrave has been with me two or three days, and left me yesterday morning. I have seen nobody else since Tuesday.—What can I have to sav?

2606. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 7, 1793.

I OFTEN lay the egg of my journals two or three days before they are hatched. This may make some of my articles a little stale before you get them; but then you know they are the more authentic, if the Echo has not told me to unsay them—and, if a Prince of Wales drops a thumping victory at my door as he goes by, you have it hot out of the oven—though, as happened lately, not half baked.[1]

The three last newspapers are much more favourable than you seemed to expect. Nieuport has been saved; Ostend is safe. The Royalists in La Vendée are not demolished, as the Convention of Liars asserted. Strasbourg seems likely to fall. At Toulon even the Neapolitans, on whom you certainly did not reckon, have behaved like heroes. As Admiral Gravina is so hearty, though his master makes no progress in France, I suspect that the sovereign of so many *home* kingdoms is a little afraid of trusting his army beyond the borders, lest the Catalans should have something of the old—or *new* leaven. In the mean time, it is still more provoking to hear of Catherine Slay-Czar sitting on her throne and playing with royal marriages, without sending a single ship or regiment to support the cause of Europe, and to punish the Men of the Mountain, who really are the assassins that the Crusaders supposed or believed existed in Asia! Oh! Marie Antoinette, what a contrast between you and Petruchia!

Domestic news are scanty, but dismal, and you have seen them anticipated; as the loss of the young Lord Montague[2] and Mr.

[1] This alludes to some false report of the time.—WRIGHT.

[2] Lord Viscount Montague was the last male heir of a most noble and ancient family, in a lineal descent from the Lady Lucy Nevill.—WRIGHT.

Burdett,[1] drowned in a cataract in Switzerland, by their own obstinate folly. Mr. Tickell's death was a determined measure, and more shocking than the usual mode by a pistol. He threw himself from one of the uppermost windows of the palace at Hampton Court, into the garden—an immense height! Some attribute his despair to debts; some to a breach with his political friends. I was not acquainted with, but am sorry for him, as I liked his writings.[2]

Our weather remains unparagoned; Mrs. Hastings is not more brilliant: the elms are evergreen. I a little regret your not seeing how beautiful Cliveden can be on the 7th of November; ay, and how warm. Then the pheasants, partridges, and hares from Houghton, that you lose: they would have exceeded Camacho's wedding, and Sancho Panza would have talked chapters about them. I am forced to send them about the neighbourhood, as if I were making interest to be chosen for the united royal burghs of Richmond and Hampton Court.—But all this is not worth sending: I must wait for a better *bouche*. I want Wurmser to be Cæsar, and send me more Commentaries de Bello Gallico. What do you say to those wretches who have created *Death an endless Sleep*, that nobody may boggle at any crime for fear of hell? Methinks they have no reason to dread the terrors of conscience in any Frenchman!

November 10*th*.

Hiatus non deflendus; for I have neither heard a word, nor had a word to say these three days. Victories do not come every tide, like mackerel, or prizes in the Irish lottery. Yesterday's paper discounted a little of Neapolitan valour; but, as even the Dutch sometimes fight upon recollection, and as there was no account yet of O'Hara's arrival at Toulon, I hope he will laugh or example lor' Signori into spirit.

You will wonder at my resuming my letter, when I profess having nothing to add to it; but yours of the 7th is just arrived, and I could not make this commenced sheet lie quiet in my writing-box: it would begin gossiping with your letter, though I vowed it shall not set out till to-morrow. "Why, you empty thing," said I, "how do you know but there may have been a Gazette last night, crammed

[1] Charles Sedley Burdett, second son of Francis Burdett, Esq., and brother of Francis, who, on the death of his grandfather, Sir Robert Burdett, in 1797, succeeded to the baronetcy.— Wright. The Burdetts were residents at Twickenham. Cunningham.

[2] Richard Tickell, Esq., author of 'Anticipation,' the 'Wreath of Fashion,' and other poems.—Cunningham.

with vast news, which, as no paper comes out on Sundays, we shall not learn here; and would you be such a goose as to creep through Brentford and Hammersmith and Kensington, where the bells may be drinking some general's health, and will scoff you for asking whose? Indeed you shall not stir before to-morrow. [Samuel] Lysons is returned from Gloucestershire, and is to dine here to-day; and he will at least bring us a brick, like Harlequin, as a pattern of any town that we may have taken. Moreover, no post sets out from London on Sunday nights, and you would only sit guzzling—I don't mean you, Miss Berry, but you, my letter—with the clerks of the post office. Patience till to-morrow."

We have had some rain, even this last night; but the weather is fine all day, and quite warm. I believe it has made an assignation with the Glastonbury Thorn, and that they are to dance together on old Christmas-day. What could I do with myself in London? All my playthings are here, and I have no playfellows left there! Lady Herries's and poor Mrs. Hunter's[1] are shut up. Even the "one game more at cribbage"[2] after supper is on table, which is not my supreme felicity, though accompanied by the Tabor and Pipe,[3] is in the country—or, to say all in a word, North Audley-street is in Yorkshire! Reading composes little of my pastime, either in town or country. A catalogue of books and prints, or a dull history of a county, amuse me sufficiently; for now I cannot open a French book, as it would keep alive ideas that I want to banish from my thoughts. When I am tired at home, I go and sit an hour or two with the ladies of Murray,[4] or the Doyleys, and find them conversable and comfortable; and my pessime aller is Richmond.

Monday Morning, 11*th.*

Lysons has been drawing churches in Gloucestershire, and digging out a Roman villa and mosaic pavement near Cirencester, which he means to publish: but he knew nothing *outlandish;* so if the newspaper does not bring me something fresh for you presently, this limping letter must set out with its empty wallet. Mrs. Piozzi is going to publish a book on English Synonymes. Methinks she had better have studied them, before she stuffed her Travels with so many vulgarisms!

[1] Widow of Dr. John Hunter.—Wright.
[2] A manner of designating the Countess of Ailesbury.—Wright.
[3] Two old ladies of his society, whom he thus called.—Wright.
[4] Sisters to the great Earl of Mansfield.—Wright.

2607. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 10, 1793.

I RETURN your Ladyship the lines, as you ordered, and do not recollect having seen them before. They may have been written by Mary, for I think she did write some French verses; and, if she did write these, very poorly too, both as to the language and poetry, as far as I can read them, for they are very badly transcribed. They ought to be well authenticated, if the original paper exists. Has it lain at Fotheringhay till now, and yet is preserved, and was never seen before? I am a little incredulous, and as incurious, for the lines only excite compassion, no admiration.

I am much obliged to your Ladyship's inquiries. I cannot say I am very well; yet as I am not likely at my age to improve, it is not worth a new paragraph: nor can I send you one that deserves to be sent. I have not seen a face these three days but of my own servants; and the wheelbarrow that carries away the dead leaves, passes its time in a livelier manner than I do. I might *seek* for more diversion; yet not being at all convinced that I should find it, I am content to let the days pass as they please; and when they bring me no disturbance, I am not of a temper to invent any for myself. If old folks would be satisfied with tranquillity, they would find more of it attainable than any former objects of their pursuits. Nature furnishes them with insensibility to others; but then they are often apt to substitute the love of money for the love of their friends, and are so foolish as not to reflect that every half-year's interest of their money costs them half-a-year of their life. I don't know whether any moralist ever made this reflection; if there did, it has been like other truths, of little effect. The French philosophers take another method; they do not demonstrate the inefficacy of moralising. On the contrary, lest it should have any operation, they expunge all morality and attempt to establish universal liberty by destruction of all religion, and all the terrors of futurity. Men would certainly be perfectly free, if restrained by no government without, and by no apprehensions within. The system is a vast experiment. Fortunately, many of the inventors have been, and probably more of its propagators will be, the victims of such diabolic tenets: and as some axioms still maintain their solidity, that of *extremes meeting* grows every day more uncontrovertible. Turkish

despotism, that depopulated so many beautiful provinces and islands for the mere luxury of retaining the useless soil, is copied continually by French democracy; and the convention exults in the destruction of Lyons, and their own cities and towns, as if they had put all Vienna to the sword. It would be curious, could one know, of the supposed twenty-four millions of inhabitants of France five years ago, how many it has lost by emigrations, banishment, massacres, executions, battles, sieges, captives made, &c.; and by what is never counted in wars, the hosts of families of peasants, whose cottages and hovels have been destroyed by foragers and march of armies. Famine too, I suppose, could produce a long bill of those that have fallen in her department.

There is another item not yet felt, but that will be a heavy one. It is allowed that all the new levies that have been forced to the frontiers, especially to Maubeuge, are lads of fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen years of age. This is some drawback on population.

One might make some deduction from the extinction of the species by the cessation of monastic vows; but they had ceased to a considerable degree *before* the Revolution. When I was last at Paris, I had observed how rarely I met a monk or friar about the streets, and made the remark to a very intelligent person, asking him whether the writings of Voltaire and the philosophers had made the religious ashamed or unwilling to appear in public? "No," said he, "but those writings have done much more: they have so damped professions, that few men make the vows. In that convent," said he, pointing to a very large one in the Rue St. Denis, "there are literally but two friars." This is a curious fact, Madam, and I am glad I have scribbled till I recollected it. It will make you some amends for the rest of my common-place.

2608. TO MISS BERRY.

Berkeley Square, Wednesday, Dec. 4, 1793.

I BEGIN my last letter to Bransby, that I may have it ready to send away the moment I shall have anything worth telling; which I certainly have not yet. What is become of Lord Howe and Co. you may guess if you please, as everybody is doing—

I'm weary of conjectures—

but shall not end them like Cato, because I take the fate of a whole

fleet a little more likely to come to a solution than doubts in metaphysics; and if Lord Howe should at last bring home two or three French men-of-war, one would not be out of the way to receive them. In the mean time, let us chat as if the destiny of half Europe were not at this moment in agitation.

I went on Monday evening with Mrs. Damer to the little Haymarket, to see 'The Children in the Wood,'[1] having heard so much of my favourite, young Bannister, in that new piece; which, by the way, is well arranged, and near being fine. He more than answered my expectation, and all I had heard of him. It was one of the most admirable performances I ever saw: his transports of despair and joy are incomparable, and his various countenances would be adequate to the pencil of Salvator Rosa. He made me shed as many tears as I suppose the original old ballad did when I was six years old. Bannister's merit was the more striking, as, before 'The Children in the Wood,' he had been playing the sailor in 'No Song no Supper,' with equal nature. I wish I could hope to be as much pleased to-morrow night, when I am to go to Jerningham's play;[2] but there is no Bannister at Covent-garden!

On Sunday night I found the Comte de Coigni[3] at Lady Lucan's. He was to set out the next morning with Lord Moira's expedition as *a common soldier*. This sounded decent and well; but you may guess that he had squeezed a little Frenchism into his intention, and had asked for a vessel and some soldiers to attend him. I don't know whether he has condescended to go without them. I asked him about his daughter: he said, he did not believe she was in prison. Others say, it is the Duchesse de Fleury, her mother-in-law. I have been surprised at not seeing or hearing anything of poor Fleury;[4] but I am told he has been forced to abscond, having narrowly escaped being arrested by a coachmaker, to whom he owed five hundred pounds for carriages: which, to be sure, he must have had, or bespoken, at Paris before the revolution.

Thursday, noon.

Yesterday came a letter to the Admiralty, notifying that Lord

[1] A musical piece, in two acts, by Morton, and acted for the first time 1st. Oct. 1793. Bannister played 'Walter,' a carpenter, in love with 'Josephine.'—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] 'The Siege of Berwick,' a dull tragedy, in four acts,—acted for the first time at Covent Garden 13th Dec. 1793,—ran five nights.—CUNNINGHAM.

[3] Younger brother of the Duc de Coigni, the grand-écuyer of Marie Antoinette, and great-uncle of the present Duc de Coigni.—WRIGHT.

[4] The Duc de Fleury, the Count de Coigni's son-in-law.—WRIGHT.

Howe has taken five of the Brest squadron: but this intelligence is derived through so many somebodys, that handed it to somebodys, that I am not much inclined, except by wishing it true, to believe it. However, the wind is got much more to the west, and now we shall probably not remain much longer in total darkness.

Three o'clock.

Another account is come to Mrs. Nugent's[1] from her husband, with the same story of the five captive French men-of-war; and so that reading is admitted: but for my part, I will admit nothing but under Lord Howe's own hand. It is tiresome to be like the scene in Amphitryon, and cry one minute "Obvious, obvious!" and the next "Dubious, dubious!" Such fluctuability is fit only for a stock-jobber. Adieu! I must dress and dine, or I shall not be ready to wait on your grandfather Seton.[2]

2609. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 9, 1793.

Your Ladyship will forgive me for not thanking you for the paper you were so good as to send me, and for not answering your letter sooner, when you hear that for this fortnight I have had a surgeon daily attending one of the chalk-mines in my right hand, which though it does not absolutely hinder my writing, as you see, obliges me to write so slowly, and consequently better than I usually do, that I could engrave a letter in less time. I might have employed Kirgate; but I hate to dictate, when not actually forced.

Lady Compton's letter I saw many years ago, and think it has been in print since more than once, particularly, I believe, in the 'Gentleman's Magazine.'[3]

It will not sound much of a tone with my excuse, when I say that I have been twice at the play since I came to town the week before last; but not being yet reduced to walk on all-fours or not walk at all, and getting a charitable hand to lead me in and out, I did venture, and yet shall not commit such juvenilities again in

[1] The wife of Admiral Nugent.—Wright.

[2] Mr. Jerningham's play, 'The Siege of Berwick,' in which 'Sir Alexander Seaton' is a character.—Cunningham.

[3] It is printed in more than one 'Peerage.'—Cunningham.

haste; nor have I so little shame as to laugh at a much younger man thinking of mounting tiger, ridicule in myself appearing more terrible to me than in any other man, as I am always warning myself against it. I met Mr. G. about a week ago, and said to the person next me, "I am glad no caricaturist is present; he would certainly draw Mr. G. and me like the old print for children of Somebody and Nobody."

The Berrys are in Yorkshire, and have been so these four months. I have never so much as seen the person of Mallet du Pan's book; I read very little now, and only for amusement, as it is too late to be improving myself for another world. I have found out another occupation that employs a good deal of my useless time, which is sleeping. As I have the happy gift of going to sleep whenever I shut my eyes, I do not throw it away, but prefer it to hundreds of books, which would only have the same effect, with more trouble to my lame fingers. These last implore your Ladyship's pardon for saying no more, and are your most devoted, though inactive servants, &c.

2610. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Friday, December 13, 1793.

You will not wonder at my dulness about the time of your setting out, and of the *gites* you are to make on the road: you are used to my fits of incomprehension; and, as is natural at my age, I believe they increase. What augmented them was my eagerness to be sure of every opportunity of sending you the earliest intelligence of every event that may happen at this critical period. That impatience has sometimes made me too precipitate in my information. I believed Lord Howe's success too rapidly: you have seen by all the newspapers, that both the ministers and the public were equally credulous, from the collateral channels that imported such assertions! Well! if you have been disappointed of capturing five or six French men-of-war, you must at present stay your appetite by some handsome slices of St. Domingo, and by plentiful goblets of French blood shed by the Duke of Brunswick; which we firmly believe, though the official intelligence was not arrived last night. His Highness, who has been so serene for above a year, seems to have waked to some purpose; and, which is not less propitious, his victory indicates that his principal, the King of Prussia, has added no more French jewels

to his regalia. I shall like to hear the National Convention accuse him of being bribed by a contrary *Pitt's* diamond.[1]

Here is another comfortable symptom: it looks as if Robespierre would give up Barrère. How fortunate that Beelzebubs and Molochs peach one another, like human highway-men! I will tell you a reflection I have made, and which shows how the worst monsters counteract their own councils. Many formerly, who meant to undermine religion, began by sapping the belief of a devil. *Now*, by denying God, they have restored Satan to his throne, or will; though the present system is a republic of fiends. The Pandemonium below recalls its agents, as if they were only tribunes of the people elected by temporary factions. Barnave, called the Butcher in the first Convention, is gone, like Orleans and Brissot. If we do not presume to interpret *judgments*, I wonder the monsters themselves do not: enough has happened already to warn them of their own fate!

The Conways are in town for two or three days: they came for Mr. Jerningham's play. Harris had at last allowed him the fourth night; and he had a good night. I have a card from Lady Amherst for Monday; and shall certainly go, as my lord behaved so nobly about your cousin.[2] I have another from the Margravine of Anspach, to sup at Hammersmith;[3] whither I shall certainly not go, but plead the whole list of chronical distempers. Do you think, if the whole circle of Princes of Westphalia were to ask me for next *Thursday evening*,[4] that I would accept the invitation?

Saturday, December 14, 1793.

I am glad this is to be the last of my gazettes. I am tired of notifying and recalling the articles of news: not that I am going to dis-laurel the Duke of Brunswick; but not a sprig is yet come in confirmation. Military critics even conjecture, by the journals from Manheim and Frankfort, that the German victories have not been much more than repulses of the French, and have been bought dearly. I have inclined to believe the best from Wurmser; but I confess my best hopes are from the factions of Paris. If the

[1] He means bribed by the then prime minister.—WRIGHT.

[2] Lord Amherst, then commander-in-chief, had appointed a cousin of Miss Berry's to an ensigncy, on his recommendation.—WRIGHT.

[3] At Brandenburg House, on the banks of the Thames; formerly Dodington's and afterwards (1820-21) notorious as the residence of Caroline, queen of George IV.—CUNNINGHAM.

[4] When the persons addressed were to arrive in London.—WRIGHT.

gangrene does not gain the core, how calculate the duration? It has already baffled all computation, all conjecture. One wonders now that France, in its totality, was not more fatal to Europe than even it was. Is not it astonishing, that after five years of such havoc, such emigrations, expulsions, massacres, annihilation of commerce, evanition of specie, and real or impending famine, they can still furnish and support armies against us and the Austrians in Flanders against the Duke of Brunswick and Wurmser, against us at Toulon, against the King of Sardinia, against Spain, against the Royalists in La Vendée, and along the coast against our expedition under Lord Moira; and though we have got fifteen of their men-of-war at Toulon, they have sixteen, or more, at Brest, and are still impertinent with a fry of privateers? Consider, too, that all this spirit is kept up by the most extravagant lies, delusions, rhodomontade; by the extirpation of the usual root of enthusiasm, religion; and by the terror of murder, that ought to revolt all mankind. If such a system of destruction does not destroy itself, there is an end of that *ignis fatuus*, human reason; and French policy must govern, or exterminate mankind.

I this moment received your Thursday's note, with that for your housekeeper, who is in town, and with those sweet words, "You need not leave a card; we shall be at home." I do not believe I shall send you an excuse. Marshal Conway has stepped in to tell me, he has just met with his nephew, Lord Yarmouth,[1] who has received a letter from a foreign minister at Manheim, who asserts all the Duke of Brunswick's victories, and the destruction or dispersion of the French army in that quarter. The Earl maintains, that the King of Prussia's politics are totally changed to the right, and that eighteen thousand more of his troops have joined the allies. I should like to know, and to have the Convention know, that the murder of the Queen of France has operated this revulsion.

I hope I send you no more falsehoods—at least, you must allow, that it is not on bad authority. If Lord Howe has disappointed you, will you accept the prowess of the virago his sister Mrs. Howe.[2]

[1] The third Marquis of Hertford; died 1842.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] The Hon. Caroline Howe, married to John Howe, of Hanslope, Bucks. She died at her house, No. 12, Grafton-street, 29th June, 1814, in her 93rd year.—CUNNINGHAM. A person of distinguished abilities. She possessed an extraordinary force of mind, clearness of understanding, and remarkable powers of thought and combination. She retained them unimpaired to the great age of eighty-five, by exercising them daily, both in the practice of mathematics and in reading the two dead languages; of which, late in life, she had made herself mistress. To those

As soon as it was known that her brother had failed, a Jacobin mob broke her windows, mistaking them for his. She lifted up the sash, and harangued them; told them that was not the house of her brother, who lives in the other part of Grafton-street, and that she herself is a widow, and that *that* house is hers. She stilled the waves, and they dispersed quietly.

There! There end my volumes, to my great satisfaction! If we are to have any bonfires or illuminations, you will be here to light them yourselves. Adieu to Yorkshire!

2611. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 26, 1793.

You are too good, Madam, in giving yourself the trouble of inquiring after my decays. As they are not so rapid as I might reasonably expect, they are not worthy of interesting anybody; and, while seldom attended by pain, I have little cause for complaint.

I am glad Lord and Lady Warwick are pleased with their new villa [at Isleworth]: it is a great favourite with me. In my brother's time [Sir Edward W.'s] I used to sit with delight in the bow-window in the great room, for besides the lovely scene of Richmond, with the river, park, and barges, there is an incessant ferry for foot passengers between Richmond and Isleworth, just under the Terrace; and on Sundays Lord Shrewsbury pays for all the Catholics that come to his chapel from the former to the latter, and Mrs. Keppel has counted an hundred in one day, at a penny each. I have a passion for seeing passengers, provided they do pass; and though I have the river, the road, and two foot-paths before my Blue Room at Strawberry, I used to think my own house dull whenever I came from my brother's. Such a partiality have I for moving objects, that in advertisements of country-houses I have thought it a recommendation when there was a N.B. of *three stage coaches pass by the door every day.* On the contrary, I have an aversion to a park, and especially for a walled

acquirements must be added warm and lively feelings, joined to a perfect knowledge of the world, and of the society of which she had always been a distinguished member. Mr. Walpole, from misinformation of her conduct towards a friend of his in earlier life, had never done justice to her character—a mistake, in which she did not participate, relative to him.—M.B.

park, in which the capital event is the coming of the cows to water. A park-wall with ivy on it and fern near it, and a back parlour in London in summer, with a dead creeper and a couple of sooty sparrows, are my strongest ideas of melancholy solitude. *A pleasing melancholy* is a very august personage, but not at all good company. I am still worse, when I have so little to say; but indeed I only meant this as a letter of thanks for your kind inquiries after my lame hand, of which my surgeon has taken leave this morning.

Your Ladyship's most obliged, &c.

2612. TO THE EARL OF HARCOURT.[1]

My dear Lord, *Berkeley Square, Jan. 7, 1794.*

I wish I knew how to distinguish my gratitude to your Lordship from vanity, but warm as the former is, you must allow me to say that the latter has not digestion strong enough to swallow the excessive compliments Mr. Hagget has paid to my Tragedy, which besides the gross fault in choosing such a subject, has many defects that deserve his censure. His too great partiality deprives me of the pleasure of doing full justice to his 'Villeroi,' as that justice would in me be supposed to flow from the prejudice of self-love; yet it would be too unjust to the author not to confess his great merit and abilities, both in the construction and execution, and not to own how powerfully the interest rises, the farther the plan is carried.

I am sorry for many reasons that it is not to be performed, both for the sake of the author and the public, though I see reasons why neither the managers might choose to venture it, nor the Chamberlain's office; and I am sorry to think that the greater the author's merit, the more bitter enemies he would raise to himself, even in this country—to its shame! One or two passages I will take the liberty of saying I wish had been omitted, as the accusations urged by the Convention against the late King, for the breach of an oath he had been forced to take to save his life, when they had kept no oath taken to him, and especially the two last lines put into the mouth of the Queen, in page 14. As her murderers could not prove a speck in her whole character, the most pure ever demonstrated by the longest and most rigid ordeal ever

[1] Now first published.—Cunningham.

sustained by a mortal. She herself as a mortal, might to God have accused herself of past errors, but I think no one else has a right to tax her with errors, which no man now can substantiate.

Mr. Hagget I am sure will forgive my saying what truth compels me to hint, and I hope he will be assured of my respect and esteem, and your Lordship cannot doubt my being,

Your Lordship's
Most obliged and most obedient, humble servant,
ORFORD.

P.S. I cannot say how sensible I am of the great honour Lady Harcourt did me, in having the goodness to call on me, when I was gone to wait on her and your Lordship.

2613. TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 10, 1794.

I CERTAINLY sympathise with you on the reversed and gloomy prospect of affairs, too extensive to detail in a letter; nor indeed do I know anything more than I collect from newspapers and public reports; and those are so overcharged with falsehoods on all sides, that, if one waits for truth to emerge, one finds new subjects to draw one's attention before firm belief can settle its trust on any. That the mass and result are bad, is certain; and though I have great alacrity in searching for comforts and grounds of new hopes, I am puzzled as much in seeking resources, as in giving present credit. Reasoning is out of the question: all calculation is baffled: nothing happens that sense or experience said was probable. I wait to see what will happen, without a guess at what is to be expected. A storm, when the Parliament meets, will no doubt be attempted. How the ministers are prepared to combat it, I don't know, but I hope sufficiently, if it spreads no farther: at least I think they have no cause to fear the new leader who is to make the attack.

I have neither seen Mr. Wilson's book[1] nor his answerers. So far from reading political pamphlets, I hunt for any books, except modern novels, that will not bring France to my mind, or that at least will put it out for a time. But every fresh person one sees,

[1] 'A Letter, Commercial and Political, addressed to the Right Hon. William Pitt; by Jasper Wilson, jun., Esq.' The real author was Dr. Currie, the friend of Mr. Wilberforce. See 'Wilberforce's Life,' vol. ii. p. 13.—WRIGHT.

revives the conversation: and, excepting a long succession of fogs, nobody talks of anything else; nor of private news do I know a tittle. Adieu!

2614. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Jan. 30, 1794.

Lord Ossory was so good as to lend me the inclosed amusing paper, and ordered me to send it to your Ladyship. I cannot take up my pen, which I have totally laid aside but for the most urgent letters of business (and yet most of those are consigned to Kirgate) without adding a few words, though when Lord Ossory is in town, he knows ten times more than I do, who only catch some rebounds from newspapers, and believe few or none till they have been repeated till they are stale.

Political news now occupying half the face of the globe, a great part of the geography of which I have forgotten, are much too extensive for my digestion; and the home-manufacture of novelties are become almost indifferent to me, for living so much out of the world, the very persons of most of the actors are perfect strangers to me: they are the grandchildren and great grandchildren of my former intimates. Those of my past time that did remain are dropping round me, and though chiefly mere acquaintance, they leave gaps in my narrow society, which I cannot fill with their descendants. Lord Buckinghamshire, Lord Digby, Lord Barrington, Lady Greenwich, Lord Pembroke, Sir Charles Hotham, were on the stage when I frequented it, and, though the vacuum they have made, will not be perceived a month hence, they occasion one in my memory; and when one is become a rare remnant of one's contemporaries, I should think it unnatural, at least it is so to me, to interest one's self in the common occurrences of the world. And, if one is little touched by them, one is certainly little qualified to amuse others. This is my apology to your Ladyship for being so remiss in the correspondence with which you so long were pleased to honour me. I have not lost my spirits, but my activity is gone, and it is grown pleasant to indulge my indolence, of which for more than threescore years and ten I had no idea. In real regard, I am as much as ever, your Ladyship's devoted humble servant.

2615. TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.[1]

DEAR SIR, *Berkeley Square, April* 11, 1794.

I HAVE carefully gone through your MSS. with great delight; and with the few trifling corrections that I have found occasion to make, I shall be ready to restore them to you whenever it shall be convenient to you to call for them; for I own I find them too valuable to be trusted to any other hand.

As I hope I am now able to begin to take the air, I beg you not to call between eleven and two, when you would not be likely to find me at home.

Your much obliged humble servant,
ORFORD.

2616. TO MISS BERRY.

Thursday evening, April 16, 1794.

I AM delighted that you have such good weather for your *villeggiatura*. The sun has not appeared here to-day; yet it has been so warm, that he may not be gone out of town, and only keeps in because it is unfashionable to be seen in London at Easter. All my evening customers are gone, except Mrs. Damer, and she is at home to-night with the Greatheds and Mrs. Siddons, and a few more; and she had a mind I should go to her. I had a mind too; but think myself still too weak: after confinement for fourteen weeks, it seems formidable to sally forth. I have heard no novelty since you went, but of more progress in Martinico; on which it is said there is to be a Gazette, and which, I suppose, gave a small fillip to the stocks this morning: though my Jew, whom I saw again this morning, ascribed the rise to expectation in the City of news of a counter-revolution at Paris;—but a revolution *to be*, generally proves an addled egg.

The Gazette arrives, and little of Martinico remained unconquered. The account from Sir Charles Gray is one continued panegyric on the conduct of our officers, soldiers, and sailors; who do not want to be driven on *à la Dumourier*, by cannon behind them and on both sides. A good quantity of artillery and stores is taken

[1] Now first collected.—CUNNINGHAM.

too, and only two officers and about seventy men killed. There is a codicil to the Gazette, with another post taken—the map, I suppose, knows where; I do not—but you, who are a geographess, will, or easily find it out.

At my levee before dinner, I had Mrs. Buller, Lady Lucan, Sir Charles Blagden, Mr. [Archdeacon] Coxe, and Mr. Gough. This was a good day; I have not always so welcome a circle. I have run through both volumes of Mrs. Piozzi. Here and there she does not want parts, has some good translations, and stories that are new; particularly an admirable bon-mot of Lord Chesterfield, which I never heard before, but dashed with her cruel vulgarisms: see vol. ii. p. 291. The story, I dare to say, never happened, but was invented by the Earl himself, to introduce his reply. The sun never was the emblem of Louis Quinze, but of Louis Quatorze; in whose time his Lordship was not ambassador, nor the Czarina Empress: nor, foolish as some ambassadors are, could two of them propose devices for toasts; as if, like children, they were playing at pictures and mottoes: and what the Signora styles a *public toast*, the Earl, I conclude, called a *great dinner* then. I have picked out a motto for her work in her own words, and written it on the title-page: "Simplicity cannot please without eloquence!" Now I think *on't*, let me ask if you have been as much diverted as you was at first? and have not two such volumes sometimes set you *o'yawning?* It is comic, that in a treatise on synonymous words, she does not know which are and which are not so. In the chapter on worth, she says, "The worth even of money fluctuates in our *state;*" instead of saying, in this *country*. Her very title is wrong; as she does not even mention synonymous Scottish words: it ought to be called, not British, but English, Synonymy.

Mr. Courtenay has published some epistles in rhyme, in which he has honoured me with a dozen lines, and which are really some of the best in the whole set—in ridicule of my writings. One couplet, I suppose, alludes to my Strawberry Verses on you and your sister Les voici—

> "Who to love tunes his note, with the fire of old age,
> And chirps the trim lay in a trim Gothic cage!"

If I were not as careless as I am about literary fame, still this censure would be harmless indeed; for, except the exploded story of Chatterton, of which I washed myself as white as snow, Mr. Courtenay falls on my choice of subjects—as of 'Richard the

Third,' and the 'Mysterious Mother'—and not on the execution; though I fear there is enough to blame in the texture of them. But this new piece of criticism, or whatever it is, made me laugh, as I am offered up on the tomb of my poor mad nephew; who is celebrated for one of his last frantic acts, a publication in some monthly Magazine, with an absurd hypothesis on "the moon bursting from the earth, and the earth from the sun, somehow or other;" but how, indeed, especially from Mr. Courtenay's paraphrase, I have too much sense to comprehend. However, I am much obliged to him for having taken such pains to distinguish me from my lunatic precursor, that even the 'European Magazine,' when I shall die, will not be able to confound us. "Richard the Third" would be sorry to have it thought hereafter, that I had ever been under the care of Dr. Munro. Well! good night!

2617. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

April 27, 1794.

This is no plot to draw you into committing even a good deed on a Sunday, which I suppose the *literality* of your conscience would haggle about, as if the day of the week constitutes the sin, and not the nature of the crime. But you may defer your answer till to-night is become to-morrow by the clock having struck one; and then you may do an innocent thing without any guilt, which a quarter of an hour sooner you would think abominable. Nay, as an Irishman would say, you need not even *read* this note till the canonical hour is past.

In short, my dear Madam, I gave your obliging message to Lady Waldegrave, who will be happy to see you on Tuesday, at one o'clock. But as her staircase is very bad, as she is in a lodging, I have proposed that this meeting, for which I have been pimping between two female saints, may be held here in my house, as I had the utmost difficulty last night in climbing her *scala santa*, and I cannot undertake it again. But if you are so good as to send me a favourable answer to-morrow, I will take care you shall find her here at the time I mentioned, with your true admirer.

2618. TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.[1]

DEAR SIR, *Berkeley Square, May* 15, 1794.

MY house is so full of pictures that I could not place a new one without displacing some other; nor is that my chief objection; I am really much too old now to be hunting for what I may have few moments to possess; and as the possessor of the picture you mention values it highly, I am not tempted to visit what would probably be very dear. The lady represented does not strike my memory as a person about whom I have any knowledge, or curiosity; and I own I have been so often drawn to go after pictures that were merely ancient, that *now*, when I am so old, and very infirm, and go out very little, you will excuse me if I do not wait on you, though much obliged to you for your proposal. I cannot go up and down stairs without being led by a servant. It is *tempus abire* for me; *lusi satis.*

Yours most sincerely

ORFORD.

2619. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, July 22, 1794.

I RETURN the inclosed, Madam, as I ought: it could not add to the contempt I have long felt for the instigator,—it suits well with his theologic writings, and pacific principles.

I had the pleasure of meeting Lady Warwick lately at her next door neighbour's, Lady Bute's, and she has promised me the honour of coming to see my house, but I have not been to wait on her yet from the excessive heat of the mornings. I little thought I should live to complain of the violence of an English summer, but this has been so torrid as to make me seriously ill—though I believe less from its warmth than from my own extreme weakness. I have of late years been subject to great palpitations, and they come more frequently and last longer. The wise in life and death insist they are only nervous; however I was seized with one on Saturday night, which continued so stormy that at four in the morning I was foreed to send a man and horse to Twickenham for the apothecary,

[1] Now first collected.—CUNNINGHAM.

having such acute pain in my breast with it, that I concluded it the gout, and a warrant for me. Before he could arrive, I had a slight vomiting, fell asleep for four hours—and am here still! This is a pretty history to trouble your Ladyship with, yet I know nothing else but what every body knows or does not know from the newspapers, and that mass is much too vast for speculation: it is a stupendous and horrible chaos, and I know not out of what ark a Noah is to despatch a dove with an olive branch, nor where he will find one to gather, — roots and branches all seem to be plucked up!

Lord Hugh and Lady Horatia were here three days ago; she had left her poor sister Waldegrave the day before, who is all she is or can be yet, composed.

Lord Hertford has acted with great nobleness towards his brothers and sisters. It is pleasant to have virtues and heroism and great qualities to relate of this country, when fiends and furies rage in the rest of Europe.—Your Ladyship's most devoted.

2620. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, July 29, 1794.

The letter which I return, Madam, is indeed a very proper one, and the writer, Lady Maria, a very sensible girl. Her father doted on her. Lady Waldegrave admires her reason and quickness, but will not spoil her. Unfortunately for herself she was grown fondest of the poor boy, whom she has just lost so lamentably; and I am sorry to hear that she does not recover the shock so well as we had flattered ourselves she would: but I will say no more on anything relating to myself, into which your Ladyship's strange partiality is too apt to betray me (witness your last flattering note), but to send you a codicil to the impertinent account of my late illness, but in which not a grain relates to me, except as being the subject of it.

The very next morning after I was taken ill at Richmond, I heard from that fertile fountain of falsehood and tittle-tattle, that it was said, I had been walking on rough ground, and had fallen down over two *rats*, and could not rise again (the only circumstance that would have been probable), and that a man passing by (which shows the scene was laid in the high road, where neither rats nor I commonly make a promenade), helped me up, and that being struck with gratitude to this neighbour of the Gospel, I asked him

what service I could do for him in return? He replied, he should think himself fully recompensed if I would give him a perpetual ticket for seeing Strawberry Hill whenever he had a mind. Invention, I believe, never flowed more spontaneously nor with greater velocity. Would not one think that this was a commonly dead summer? that France was perfectly calm, ay, and Flanders too, and Holland perfectly safe; that all the *Northern Monarchs were kept from the dusty field?* that there was nothing at sea but my father's *Spithead Expeditions*. Would to heaven there were not! and that Mrs. Fitzherbert and Lord Howe are as satisfied as if both were nodding under *ostrich feathers!* The Richmond tale is like those we used to receive from Cork, when there was not a tittle of news stirring in London. Good night, Madam!

2621. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 3, 1794.

I SHOULD heartily wish your Ladyship joy, Madam, of Lord Ossory's new honour,[1] if you were in the humour to be pleased with it; but as you are not, I must content myself with congratulating him most cordially, and thanking him for notifying it to me himself. You are sure that *I* must feel for him the happiness of being released from the House of Commons, and from the servility of courting popularity for a county election. If some vile French-hired newspapers should abuse him, it will prevent their applauding him, which is scandal indeed! Everything dear to man is at stake, and whoever is young enough to serve his country in any situation, ought, and deserves thanks for supporting the Government, and binding himself to it. Is Robespierre a *disinterested* man?

I am not at all surprised at Lord Macartney's miscarriage; nor can help admiring the prudence of the Chinese. They would be distracted to connect with Europeans, and cannot be ignorant of our usurpations in India, though they may be ignorant of Peruvian and Mexican histories, and the no less shocking transactions in France. But I will say no more: I try to turn my thoughts from the present scene; declamation would not relieve them.

[1] An English Peerage.—R. VERNON SMITH.

2622. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Park Place, Sept. 4, 1794.

I could not thank your Ladyship sooner for giving me notice of your campaign, as you did not specify your head-quarters, and I am sadly ignorant of military stations; but Marshal Conway tells me I may safely direct my letter to Lord Ossory, at the camp near Harwich, and that it will certainly reach the commandant's lady.

I love discussions, that is, conjectures, on French affairs no more than you, Madam; yet I cannot but look on Robespierre's death as a very characteristic event, I mean as it proves the very unsettled state of that country. It is the fifth Revolution in the governing power of that country in five years; and as faction in the capital can overturn and destroy the reigning despots in the compass of twelve months, I see no reason for expecting anything like durability to a system compounded of such violent and precarious ingredients. Atrocious a monster as Robespierre was, I do not suppose the alleged crimes were true, or that his enemies, who had all been his accomplices, are a whit better monsters. If his barbarities, which were believed the sole engines of his success, should be relaxed, success will be less sure; and though lenity may give popularity to his successors, it will be but temporary—and terror removed, is a negative sensation, and produces but very transient gratitude; and then will revive unchecked, every active principle of revenge, ambition, and faction, with less fear to control them. I will prophesy no farther, nor will pretend to guess how long a genealogy of revolutions will ensue, when they breed so fast, before chaos is extinct.

Lady Waldegrave, I do believe, Madam, is composed, and acts most reasonably; Miss Hannah More has been with her, and has given me verbally a most satisfactory account of her.

If I live so long, I shall hope to have the honour of seeing more of Lady Warwick next summer. I found the same amiable sweetness and gentleness with which I used to be well acquainted at Ampthill years ago.

The 'History of the House of Brunswick' I have not seen. It is much the report that we are going to know more of that stock; but I am perfectly ignorant whether there is any foundation for that rumour.

I have read some of the descriptive verbose tales, of which your Ladyship says I was the patriarch by several mothers. All I can say for myself is, that I do not think my concubines have produced issue more natural for excluding the aid of anything marvellous.

From hence I can tell your Ladyship nothing new, but that the alterations and additions to the house have made it a delightful one, and worthy of the place. I shall return home the day after to-morrow, and am alwavs, Madam, your most devoted.

2623. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Saturday night, Sept. 27, 1794.

I HAVE been in town, as I told you I should, but gleaned nothing worth repeating, or I would have written this morning before I came away. The Churchills left me on Thursday, and were succeeded by the Marshal and Mr. Taylor, who dined and stayed all night. I am now alone, having reserved this evening to answer your long, and Agnes's short letter; but in this single one to both, for I have not matter enough for a separate maintenance.

I went yesterday to Mrs. Damer, and had a glimpse of her new house; literally a glimpse, for I saw but one room on the first floor, where she had lighted a fire, that I might not mount two flights: and as it was eight o'clock, and quite dark, she only opened a door or two, and gave me a *cat's-eye* view into them. One blemish I had descried at first; the house has a corner arrival, like her father's. Ah, me! who do not love to be led through the public. I did see the new bust of Mrs. Siddons, and a very mistressly performance it is indeed. Mrs. Damer was surprised at my saying I should expect you after another week; she said, you had not talked of returning near so soon. I do not mention this, as if to gainsay your intention; on the contrary, I hope and beg you will stay as long as either of you thinks she finds the least benefit from it; and after that, too, as long as you both like to stay. I reproached myself so sadly, and do still, for having dragged you from Italy sooner than you intended, and I am so grateful for your having had that complaisance, that unless I grow quite superannuated, I think I shall not be so selfish as to combat the inclination of either again. It is natural for me to delight in your company; but I do not even wish for it, if it lays you under any restraint. I have lived a thousand years to little

purpose, if I have not learned that half a century more than the age of one's friends is not an *agrément de plus.*

I wish you had seen Canterbury some years ago, before they whitewashed it; for it is so coarsely daubed, and thence the gloom is so totally destroyed, and so few tombs remain for so vast a mass, that I was shocked at the nudity of the whole. If you should go thither again, make the Cicerone show you a pane of glass in the east window, which does open, and exhibits a most delicious view of the ruins of St. Austin's.

Mention of Canterbury furnishes me with a very suitable opportunity for telling you a remarkable story, which I had from Lady Onslow t'other night, and which was related to her by Lord Ashburnham, on whose veracity you may depend. In the hot weather of this last summer, his lordship's very old uncle, the Bishop of Chichester,[1] was waked in his palace at four o'clock in the morning by his bed-chamber door being opened, when a female figure, all in white, entered, and sat down near him. The prelate, who protests he was not frightened, said in a tone of authority, but not with the usual triple adjuration, "Who are you?" Not a word of reply; but the personage heaved a profound sigh. The Bishop rang the bell; but the servants were so sound asleep, that nobody heard him. He repeated his question: still no answer; but another deep sigh. Then the apparition took some papers out of the ghost of its pocket, and began to read them to itself. At last, when the Bishop had continued to ring, and nobody to come, the spectre rose and departed as sedately as it had arrived. When the servants did at length appear, the Bishop cried, "Well! what have you seen?" "Seen, my Lord!" "Ay, seen; or who, what is the woman that has been here?" "Woman! my Lord!" (I believe one of the fellows smiled; though, to do her justice, Lady Onslow did not say so.) In short, when my Lord had related his vision, his domestics did humbly apprehend that his Lordship had been dreaming; and so did his whole family the next morning, for in this our day even a bishop's household does not believe in ghosts: and yet it is most certain that the good man had been in no dream, and told nothing but what he had seen; for, as the story circulated, and diverted the ungodly at the prelate's expense, it came at last to the ears of a keeper of a mad-

[1] The Right Rev. Sir William Ashburnham, Bart. His lordship died at a very advanced age, in September, 1797. He was the father of the bench, and the only bishop not appointed by George the Third.—Wright.

house in the diocese, who came and deposed, that a female lunatic under his care had escaped from his custody, and, finding the gate of the palace open, had marched up to my Lord's chamber. The deponent further said, that his prisoner was always reading a bundle of papers. I have known stories of ghosts, solemnly authenticated, less credible; and I hope you will believe this, attested by a father of our own church.

Sunday night, 28th, 1794.

I have received another letter from dear Mary, of the 26th; and here is one for sweet Agnes enclosed. By her account of Broadstairs, I thought you at the North Pole; but if you are, the whales must be metamorphosed into gigs and whiskies, or split into them, as heathen gods would have done, or Rich the harlequin. You talk of Margate, but say nothing of Kingsgate, where Charles Fox's father scattered buildings of all sorts, but in no style of architecture that ever appeared before or has since, and in no connexion with or to any other, and in all directions; and yet the oddity and number made that naked, though fertile soil, smile and look cheerful. Do you remember Gray's bitter lines on him and his vagaries and history?

I wish on your return, if in good weather, you would contrive to visit Mr. Barrett's at Lee; it is but four miles from Canterbury. You will see a child of Strawberry prettier than the parent, and so executed and so finished! There is a delicious closet, too, so flattering to me; and a prior's library so antique, and that does such honour to Mr. Wyatt's taste! Mr. Barrett, I am most sure, would be happy to show his house to you; and I know, if you tell him that I beg it, he will produce the portrait of Anne of Cleves by Holbein, in the identical ivory-box, turned like a Provence rose, as it was brought over for Henry the Eighth.[1] It will be a great favour, and it must be a fine day; for it lives in cotton and clover, and he justly dreads exposing it to any damp. He has some other good pictures; and the whole place is very pretty, though retired.

The Sunday's paper announces a dismal defeat of Clairfait; and now, if true, I doubt the French will drive the Duke of York into Holland, and then into the sea! Ora pro nobis!

P.S. If this is not a long letter, I do not know what is. The

[1] Afterwards Sir Samuel Rush Meyrick's, and now (1858) at Goodrich Court, in Herefordshire. It is marvellously fine.—CUNNINGHAM.

story of the ghost should have arrived on this, which is St. Goose's-day, or the commemoration of the ignoble army of martyrs, who have suffered in the persecution under that gormandising archangel St. Michael.

2624. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 6, 1794.

Lady Malpas was a formal good sort of woman, Madam, of whom I did not see much, as we had never lived in the same kind of society. She was an excellent daughter to a very aged mother, whom the King has good-naturedly said, shall retain the lodgings at Hampton Court for her life. Lord Cholmondeley has been as meritorious a son, as Lady Malpas was a daughter: he has been as kind a brother too and uncle to two very handsome nieces, who with their mother have been abroad with him. I could not help saying thus much in return to your Ladyship's compliment.

Lady Bute, I fear, is going. It will, indeed, make a new gap in my life, as, since her Lord's death, she has always been at home in an evening. Having come into the world when there were such beings as women that did grow old, she had remembered that odd fashion, and did not set out at midnight for all the crowds in town. But I am talking like Methusalem, and no wonder, for I have tapped my seventy-eighth year, and like other veterans, who think that all the manners, customs, and agreeableness, were in perfection just when they were one-and-twenty, and have degenerated ever since, I am lamenting the loss of my contemporaries, as if the world ought to be peopled by us Strulbrugs. It would be a dull world indeed, and all conversation would consist of our old stories, which I cannot think with the newspapers make us venerable, but tiresome. Here am I living to see the opening of a court of a fourth George, though I was ten years old when I kissed the hand of the First, which young people must think was soon after the deluge, and perhaps be desirous of asking me how soon there were any races after the waters had subsided. It is more surprising that your Ladyship should have patience to suffer the annals of my dotage.

Lord Ossory, I conclude, is very glad to have changed his campaign into that against the partridges,

"And turned his harp into a harpsicord,"

but I cannot agree with your Ladyship in thinking the bickerings at Paris will come to nothing: though timid of conjecturing after so many disappointments, I cannot conceive how, where there is no stability, there can be a permanent Government. Till some very great man arises—and I see none of the breed—how will the country be settled? Will a fluctuation of factions not destroy all respect? Will the contradictory reports on the characters of every leading chieftain not confound the armies, who already can be encouraged by nothing but plunder? and who can remain very popular at Paris, while decried by the remaining partizans of so many subverted demagogues? How long it will be before anarchy comes to a sediment, the wisest political chemist cannot determine; but the workings announce new explosions: and at least the search after the philosopher's stone has been as fatal to successive projectors, as it has been to sundry in private life—and certainly has not discovered the *elixir vitæ*.

I am not sorry, Madam, that you did not visit the ruins of Houghton, and the relics of my poor nephew's madness, and what his friends and plunderers had yet left to him. You would have found no flight of steps to the front of the house, which one of his counsellors had advised him to remove, and then begged for a villa of his own. You say you went to another scene of desolation, and could not help moralising. I hold it better to forget than to reflect: what is permanent? What has lasted but the pyramids, and who knows the builder of them? Moralising is thinking; and thinking is not the road to felicity. I am even of opinion that a line meant as severe, contains the true secret of happiness—

"In Folly's cup still laughs the bubble, Joy."

What signifies whether it be foolish or not, as long as the bubble does not burst; a property which the most eminent sages have not dared to ascribe to wisdom.

2625. TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, Tuesday, Oct. 7, 1794.

Your answer, which I own arrived a day sooner than I flattered myself it would—I wish it could have told me how you passed the storm of Sunday night—has not only relieved me from all anxiety on the subject, but has made me exceedingly happy; for though I

mistook you for a moment, it has proved to me, that I had judged perfectly rightly of your excellent and most uncommon understanding. Astonished I was, no doubt, while I conceived that you wished to be placed in a situation so unworthy of your talents and abilities and knowledge, and powers of conversation.[1] I never was of a Court myself; but from my birth and the position of my father, could, but for my first twenty years, know much of the nature of the beast; and, from my various connections since, I have seldom missed farther opportunities of keeping up my acquaintance even with the interior. The world in general is not ignorant of the complexion of most Courts; though ambition, interest, and vanity are always willing to leap over their information, or to fancy they can counteract it: but I have no occasion to probe that delusion, nor to gainsay your random opinion, that a court life may be eligible for women. Yes, for the idle ones you specify, perhaps so;—for respectable women I think much less than even for men. I do not mean with regard to what is called their *character;* as if there were but *one* virtue with which women have any concern—I speak of their understanding, and consequential employment of their time. In a Court there must be much idleness, even without dissipation; and amongst the female constituents, much self-importance ill-founded; some ambition, jealousy, envy—and thence hatred, insincerity, little intrigues for credit, and—but I am talking as if there were any occasion to dissuade you from what you despise; and I have only stated what occasioned my surprise at your thinking of what you never did think at all.

Still, while I did suppose that in any pore of your heart there did lurk such a wish, I did give a great gulp and swallow down all attempts to turn your thoughts aside from it—and why? Yes, and you must be ready to ask me, how such a true friend could give into the hint without such numerous objections to a plan so unsuitable for you! Oh! for strong reasons too. In the first place, I was sure, that, without my almost century of experience, your good sense must have anticipated all my arguments. You often confute my desultory logic on points less important, as I frequently find; but the true cause of my assenting, without suffering a sigh to escape me was, because I was conscious that I could not dissuade you fairly, without a grain or more of *self* mixing in the argument. I would

[1] This alludes to a wish he supposed Miss Berry to have had for a nomination in the household of Caroline Princess of Wales, then forming.—M.B.

not trust myself with myself. I would not act again as I did when you was in Italy; and answered you as fast as I could, less self should relapse. Yet, though it did not last an hour, what a combat it was! What a blow to my dream of happiness, should you be attached to a Court! for though you, probably, would not desert Cliveden entirely, how distracted would your time be!—But I will not enter into the detail of my thoughts; you know how many posts they travel in a moment, when my brain is set at work, and how firmly it believes all it imagines: besides the defalcation of your society, I saw the host of your porphyrogeniti, from *top* to bottom, bursting on my tranquillity. But enough; I conquered all these dangers, and still another objection rose: when I had discovered the only channel I could open to your satisfaction, I had no little repugnance to the emissary I was to employ.[1] Though it is my intention to be equitable to him, I should be extremely sorry to give him a shadow of claim on me; and you know those who might hereafter be glad to conclude, that it was no wonder they should be disappointed, when gratitude on your account had been my motive. —But my cares are at an end; and though I have laboured through two painful days, the thorns of which were sharpened, not impeded, by the storm, I am rejoiced at the blunder I made, as it has procured me the kindest, and most heart-dictated, and most heartfelt letter, that ever was written; for which I give you millions of thanks. Forgive my injurious surmise; for you see, that though you can wound my affection, you cannot allay its eagerness to please you, at the expense of my own satisfaction and peace.

Having stated with most precise truth all I thought related to *yourself*, I do resume and repeat all I have said both in this and my former letter, and renew exactly the same offers to my sweet Agnes, if she has the least wish for what I supposed you wished. Nay, I owe still more to her; for I think she left Italy more unwillingly than you did, and gratitude to either is the only circumstance that can add to my affection for either. I can swallow my objections to trying my nephew as easily for her as for you; but, having had two days and a half for thinking the whole case over, I have no sort of doubt but the whole establishment must be completely settled by this time; or that, at most, if any places are not fixed yet, it must be from the strength and variety of contending interests: and, besides, the new Princess will have fewer of each class of attendants than a

[1] His nephew, Lord Cholmondeley.—Wright.

Queen; and I shall not be surprised if there should already be a *brouillerie* between the two Courts about some or many of the nominations: and though the interest I thought of trying was the only one I could pitch upon, I do not, on reflection, suppose that a person just favoured has favour enough already to recommend others. Hereafter that may be better; and a still more feasible method, I think, would be to obtain a promise against a vacancy; which, at this great open moment nobody will think of asking, when the present is so uppermost in their minds: and now my head is cool, perhaps I could strike out more channels, should your sister be so inclined. But of that we will talk when we meet.

Thursday.

I have received the second letter that I expected, and it makes me quite happy on all the points that disquieted me; on the Court, on the tempest, and I hope on privateers, as you have so little time to stay on Ararat, and the winds that terrify me for you, will, I trust, be as formidable to them. Above all, I rejoice at your approaching return: on which I would not say a syllable seriously, not only because I would have you please yourselves, but that you may profit as much as possible by change of air. I retract all my mistake; and though, perhaps, I may have floundered on with regard to A., still I have not time to correct or write any part of it over again. Besides, every word was the truth of my heart; and why should not you see what is or was in it? Adieu!

2626. TO THE MISS BERRYS.

October 17, 1794.

I HAD not the least doubt of Mr. Barrett's showing you the greatest attention: he is a most worthy man, and has a most sincere friendship for me, and I was sure would mark it to any persons that I love. I do not guess what your criticisms on his library will be: I do not think we shall agree in them; for to me it is the most perfect thing I ever saw, and has the most the air it was intended to have—that of an abbot's library, supposing it could have been so exquisitely finished three hundred years ago. But I am sorry he will not force Mr. Wyatt to place the Mabeuse over the chimney; which is the sole defect, as not distinguished enough for the principal feature of the room. *My* closet is as perfect in its way as

the library; and it would be difficult to suspect that it had not been a remnant of the ancient convent, only newly painted and gilt. My cabinet, nay, nor house, convey any conception; every true Goth must perceive that they are more the works of fancy than of imitation.

I believe the less that our opinions will coincide, as you speak so slightingly of the situation of Lee, which I admire. What a pretty circumstance is the little river! and so far from the position being insipid, to me it has a tranquil cheerfulness that harmonises with the house, and seems to have been the judicious selection of a wealthy abbot, who avoided ostentation, but did not choose austere gloomth. I do not say that Lee is as gay as a watering-place upon a naked beach. I am very glad, and much obliged to you for having consented to pass the night at Lee. I am sure it made Mr. Barrett very happy. I shall let him know how pleased you was; and I too, for his attentions to you.

The mass of politics is so inauspicious, that if I tapped it, I should not finish my letter for the post, and my reflections would not contribute to your amusement; which I should be sorry to interrupt, and which I beg you to pursue as long as it is agreeable to you. It is satisfaction enough to me to know you are happy; and it is my study to make you so, as far as my little power can extend: and, as I promised you on your condescension in leaving Italy at my prayer, I will never object to whatever you like to do, and will accept, and wait with patience for, any moments you will bestow on your devoted,

ORFORD

2627. TO THE REV. WILLIAM BELOE.[1]

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 2, 1794.

I DO beg and beseech you, good Sir, to forgive me, if I cannot possibly consent to receive the dedication[2] you are so kind and partial as to propose to me. I have in the most positive, and almost uncivil manner, refused a dedication or two lately. Compliments on virtues which the persons addressed, like me, seldom possessed, are happily exploded and laughed out of use. Next to

[1] Author of 'Anecdotes of Literature and Scarce Books,' in six vols. 8vo., and of 'The Sexagenarian, or Recollections of a Literary Life.' He died in 1817.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] Of his translation of 'Aulus Gellius.'—CUNNINGHAM.

being ashamed of having good qualities bestowed on me to which I should have no title, it would hurt to be praised on my erudition, which is most superficial; and on my trifling writings, all of which turn on most trifling subjects. They amused me while writing them; may have amused a few persons; but have nothing solid enough to preserve them from being forgotten with other things of as light a nature. I would not have your judgment called in question hereafter, if somebody reading your 'Aulus Gellius' should ask, "What were those writings of Lord O. which Mr. Beloe so much commends? Was Lord O. more than one of the *mob of gentlemen who wrote with ease?*" Into that class I must sink; and I had rather do so imperceptibly, than to be plunged down to it by the interposition of the hand of a friend, who could not gainsay the sentence.

For your own sake, my good Sir, as well as in pity to my feelings, who am sore at your offering what I cannot accept, restrain the address to a mere inscription. You are allowed to be an excellent translator of classic authors; how unclassic would a dedication in the old-fashioned manner appear! If you had published a new edition of 'Herodotus' or 'Aulus Gellius,' would you have ventured to prefix a Greek or Latin dedication to some modern lord with a Gothic title? Still less, had those addresses been in vogue at Rome, would any Roman author have inscribed his work to Marcus, the incompetent son of Cicero, and told the unfortunate offspring of so great a man, *of his high birth and declension of ambition?* which would have excited a laugh on poor Marcus, who, whatever may have been said of him, had more sense than to leave proofs to the public of his extreme inferiority to his father.

2628. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 8, 1794.

I AM quite surprised at the constancy of your Ladyship's patience, who can still think it worth your while to correspond with Methusalem, who know nothing of the late world, and who have been twice shut up here in my little ark by two new editions of the 'Deluge,' the amplest we ever knew since my grandfather Noah's, except one twenty years ago, when the late Duchess of Northumberland was overtaken by it on the road, and was forced to ride with her two legs out of the windows in the front of her post-chaise.

The island over against me has begun to emerge, but I have not seen a stripe of a rainbow, and therefore cannot be sure that the flood will not return. However, the season has been so warm, that I have not thought of going to town, nor have been there this age. Indeed, I have outlived all my acquaintance there, and all the hours to which I was accustomed, and it is not worth the trouble of learning new, which I can have but short occasion to use.

Lady Bute[1] is a great loss to me: she was the only remaing one of my contemporaries who had submitted to grow old, and to stay at home in an evening. Lord Macartney I have not seen since his return; nor scarce anybody but a few of the natives of Richmond and Hampton Court, and they are still living on the arrangements of the future new Court, and of those I have barely heard their names since their christenings; consequently, I know little but what I remember as an antediluvian (and that with a departing memory), and the height of the waters as a post-diluvian.

Of the new Countess of Exeter I did hear a good account two years ago, especially of her great humility and modesty on her exaltation. If she is brought into the fashionable world, I should think the Duchess of Gordon would soon laugh her out of those vulgar prejudices, though she may not correct her diction or spelling.

I am much obliged to Lord Ossory for his, though vain, hunt after a portrait of Catharine Parr. I have a small damaged one by Holbein that I believe of her, as it resembles a whole length, called hers, too, at Lord Denbigh's, but his Dutch mother, or more than Dutch father, had so blundered or falsified many of the names, though there are many valuable and some fine portraits, that I could depend on few.

On politics I say nothing, Madam, as I have no intelligence but from newspapers, and those I seldom believe. I can no more ride in the whirlwind than I can direct the storm; and the scene is a vast deal too wide to let one scan a view from any detached headland. I leave to history to collect the mass together, and digest it as well as it can; and then I should believe it, as I do most ancient histories, composed by men who did not live at the time, and guessed as well as they could at the truth and motives of what had happened, or who, like Voltaire and David Hume, formed a story that would suit their opinions, and raise their characters as ingenious writers.

[1] Lady Mary Wortley's daughter.—CUNNINGHAM.

For Voltaire with his *n'est-ce pas mieux comme cela?* he avowed treating history like a wardrobe of ancient habits, that he would cut, and alter, and turn, into what dresses he pleased; and having made so free with all modes, and manners, and measures, and left truth out of his *régime*, his journeymen and apprentices learnt to treat all uniforms as cavalierly; and beginning by stripping mankind of all clothes, they next plundered them of every rag, and then butchered both men and women, that they might have no occasion even for a fig-leaf: a lovely history will that of their transactions be!

2629. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

My best Madam, *Berkeley Square, Saturday night, Jan.* 24, 1795.

I will never more complain of your silence; for I am perfectly convinced that you have no idle, no unemployed moments. Your indefatigable benevolence is incessantly occupied in good works; and your head and your heart make the utmost use of the excellent qualities of both. You have given proofs of the talents of one, and you certainly do not wrap the still more precious talent of the other in a napkin. Thank you a thousand times for your most ingenious plan; may great success reward you!

I sent one instantly to the Duchess of Gloucester, whose piety and zeal imitate yours at a distance; but she says she cannot afford to subscribe just at this severe moment, when the poor so much want her assistance, but she will on the thaw, and should have been flattered by receiving a plan from yourself. I sent another to Lord Harcourt, who, I trust, will show it to a much greater lady; and I repeated some of the facts you told me of the foul fiends, and their anti-*More* activity. I sent to Mr. White for half-a-dozen more of your plans, and will distribute them wherever I have hopes of their taking root and blossoming. To-morrow I will send him my subscription;[1] and I flatter myself you will not think it a breach of Sunday, nor will I make this long, that I may not widen that fracture. Good-night! How calm and comfortable must your slumbers be on the pillow of every day's good deeds!

Monday.

Yesterday was dark as midnight. Oh! that it may be the darkest

[1] To the fund for promoting the printing and dispersion of the works sold at the Cheap Repository.—Wright.

day in all respects that we shall see! But these are themes too voluminous and dismal for a letter, and which your zeal tells me you feel too intensely for me to increase, when you are doing all in your power to counteract them. One of my grievances is, that the sanguinary inhumanity of the times has almost poisoned one's compassion, and makes one abhor so many thousands of our own species, and rejoice when they suffer for their crimes. I could feel no pity on reading the account of the death of Condorcet (if true, though I doubt it). He was one of the greatest monsters exhibited by history; and is said to have poisoned himself from famine and fear of the guillotine; and would be a new instance of what I suggested to you for a tract, to show, that though we must not assume a pretension to judging of divine judgments, yet we may believe that the economy of Providence has so disposed causes and consequences, that such villains as Danton, Robespierre, the Duke of Orleans, &c. &c. &c., do but dig pits for themselves. I will check myself, or I shall wander into the sad events of the last five years, down to the rage of party that has sacrificed Holland! What a fund for reflection and prophetic apprehension! May we have as much wisdom and courage to stem our malevolent enemies, as it is plain, to our lasting honour, we have had charity to the French emigrants, and have bounty for the poor who are suffering in this dreadful season!

Adieu, thou excellent woman! thou reverse of that hyæna in petticoats, Mrs. Wolstoncroft, who to this day discharges her ink and gall on Maria Antoinette, whose unparalleled sufferings have not yet stanched that Alecto's blazing ferocity. Adieu! adieu! Yours from my heart.

P. S. I have subscribed five guineas at Mr. White's to your plan.

2630. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 13, 1795.

I RECEIVED your letter and packet of lays and virelays, and heartily wish they may fall in bad ground, and produce a hundred thousand fold, as I doubt is necessary. How I admire the activity of your zeal and perseverance! Should a new church ever be built, I hope in a side chapel there will be an altar dedicated to St. Hannah,

Virgin and Martyr; and that your pen, worn to the bone, will be enclosed in a golden reliquaire, and preserved on the shrine.

These few words I have been forced to dictate, having had the gout in my right hand above this fortnight; but I trust it is going off. The Duchess [of Gloucester] was much pleased with your writing to her, and ordered me to thank you. Your friend Lady Waldegrave is in town, and looks very well. Adieu, best of women! Yours most cordially.[1]

2631. TO WILLIAM ROSCOE, ESQ.

Berkeley Square, April 4, 1795.

To judge of my satisfaction and gratitude on receiving the very acceptable present of your book,[2] Sir, you should have known my extreme impatience for it from the instant Mr. Edwards had kindly favoured me with the first chapters. You may consequently conceive the mortification I felt at not being able to thank you immediately both for the volume and the obliging letter that accompanied it, by my right arm and hand being swelled and rendered quite immoveable and useless, of which you will perceive the remains if you can read these lines, which I am forcing myself to write, not without pain, the first moment I have power to hold a pen; and it will cost me some time, I believe, before I can finish my whole letter, earnest as I am, Sir, to give a loose to my gratitude.

[1] In a letter to her sister, dated from Fulham Palace, Miss More says—"Lord Orford has presented me with Bishop Wilson's edition of the Bible, in three volumes quarto, superbly bound in morocco (oh! that he would himself study that blessed book), to which, in the following most flattering inscription, he attributes my having done far more good than is true,—

To his excellent friend,
MISS HANNAH MORE,
THE BOOK,
which he knows to be the dearest object of her study,
and by which,
to the great comfort and relief
of numberless afflicted and distressed individuals,
she has profited beyond any person with whom he is acquainted,
is offered,
as a mark of his esteem and gratitude,
by her sincere
and obliged humble servant,
HORACE, EARL OF ORFORD,
1795."
—WRIGHT.

[2] 'The Life of Lorenzo de' Medici.—BERRY.

If you ever had the pleasure of reading such a delightful book as your own, imagine, Sir, what a comfort it must be to receive such an anodyne in the midst of a fit of the gout that has already lasted above nine weeks, and which at first I thought might carry me to Lorenzo de' Medici before he should come to me!

The complete volume has more than answered the expectations which the sample had raised. The Grecian simplicity of the style is preserved throughout; the same judicious candour reigns in every page; and without allowing yourself that liberty of indulging your own bias towards good or against criminal characters, which over-rigid critics prohibit, your artful candour compels your readers to think with you without seeming to take a part yourself. You have shown from his own virtues, abilities, and heroic spirit, why Lorenzo deserved to have Mr. Roscoe for his biographer. And since you have been so, Sir, (for he was not completely known before, at least not out of Italy,) I shall be extremely mistaken if he is not henceforth allowed to be, in various lights, one of the most excellent and greatest men with whom we are well acquainted, especially if we reflect on the shortness of his life and the narrow sphere in which he had to act. Perhaps I ought to blame my own ignorance, that I did not know Lorenzo as a beautiful poet; I confess I did not. Now I do, I own I admire some of his sonnets more than several—yes, even of Petrarch; for Lorenzo's are frequently more clear, less *alembiqués*, and not inharmonious as Petrarch's often are from being too crowded with words, for which room is made by numerous elisions, which prevent the softening alternacy of vowels and consonants. That thicket of words was occasioned by the embarrassing nature of the sonnet; a form of composition I do not love, and which is almost intolerable in any language but Italian, which furnishes such a profusion of rhymes. To our tongue the sonnet is mortal, and the parent of insipidity. The imitation in some degree of it was extremely noxious to a true poet, our Spenser; and he was the more injudicious by lengthening his stanza in a language so barren of rhymes as ours, and in which several words whose terminations are of similar sounds are so rugged, uncouth, and unmusical. The consequence was, that many lines which he forced into the service to complete the quota of his stanza are unmeaning, or silly, or tending to weaken the thought he would express.

Well, Sir: but if you have led me to admire the compositions of Lorenzo, you have made me intimate with another poet, of whom I had never heard nor had the least suspicion; and who, though

writing in a less harmonious language than Italian, outshines an able master of that country, as may be estimated by the fairest of all comparisons—which is, when one of each nation versifies the same ideas and thoughts.

That novel poet I boldly pronounce is Mr. Roscoe. Several of his translations of Lorenzo are superior to the originals, and the verses more poetic; nor am I bribed to give this opinion by the present of your book, nor by any partiality, nor by the surprise of finding so pure a writer of history as able a poet. Some good judges to whom I have shown your translations entirely agree with me. I will name one most competent judge, Mr. Hoole, so admirable a poet himself, and such a critic in Italian, as he has proved by a translation of Ariosto. That I am not flattering you, Sir, I will demonstrate; for I am not satisfied with one essential line in your version of the most beautiful, I think, of all Lorenzo's stanzas. It is his description of Jealousy, in page 268, equal, in my humble opinion to Dryden's delineations of the Passions, and the last line of which is—

Mai dorme, ed ostinata a se sol cred.

The thought to me is quite new, and your translation I own does not come up to it. Mr. Hoole and I hammered at it, but could not content ourselves. Perhaps by altering your last couplet you may enclose the whole sense, and make it equal to the preceding six.

I will not ask your pardon, Sir, for taking so much liberty with you. You have displayed so much candour and so much modesty, and are so free from pretensions, that I am confident you will allow that truth is the sole ingredient that ought to compose deserved incense; and if ever commendation was sincere, no praise ever flowed with purer veracity than all I have said in this letter does from the heart of, Sir, your infinitely obliged humble servant.

2632. TO EDMUND LODGE, ESQ.[1]

DEAR SIR, *Strawberry Hill, June* 19, 1795.

I HAVE been meditating how to execute in the best manner I am able the commands with which the Duke of Norfolk[2] has too

[1] Now first published. Mr. Lodge made two noble contributions to English History, viz., 'Lodge's Illustrations,' and 'Lodge's Portraits.'—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] Charles Howard. He succeeded his father as Duke of Norfolk, in 1786, and died in 1815.—CUNNINGHAM.

partially been pleased to honour me. His Grace's family has given rise to such a number of illustrious persons and great historic events, that selection is the principal difficulty; and I am sure I have not the vanity to take upon me to decide what subject deserves best to be preferred for the third picture. All I will pretend to, is to offer to his Grace's consideration three or four subjects, and the Duke's own better judgment will determine which of them will furnish the most picturesque representation.

1. The Battle of Flodden Field, with the death of James IV.
2. The Defeat of the Spanish Armada, where so many Howards distinguished themselves.
3. The Duke of Norfolk at bowls on Richmond Green, receiving the Treasurer's Staff on the resignation of his Father.
4. Henry VIII. and his attendants, all masqued, at a ball at Cardinal Wolsey's, where the King distinguished Anne Boleyn.

I do not forget the amiable Earl of Surrey's Tournament at Florence, nor his improvement of our poetry, nor the Earl of Arundel's introduction of taste for painting and antiques, nor a much earlier Earl of Arundel's marriage with Adeliza, the widowed Queen of Henry I., nor Thomas of Brotherton, and the Bigods and Mowbrays, and the desired alliance of Edward IV.'s second son with the young Duchess of Norfolk, and many other historic subjects in that great race, but those are themes for smaller decorations, yet deserving to be recorded in Arundel Castle, and which could not be equalled in any other seat in England; but I fear I am trespassing on the Duke's patience, though I hope his Grace will pardon what flows from a zeal awakened by his flattering notice of an old and otherwise useless antiquary—and, dear Sir,

Your obedient humble Servant,

2633. TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, July 2, 1795.

I WILL write a word to you, though scarce time to write one, to thank you for your great kindness about the soldier, who shall get a substitute if he can. As you are, or have been in town, your daughter will have told you in what a bustle I am, preparing—not to resist, but to receive an invasion of royalties to-morrow; and cannot even escape them like Admiral Cornwallis though seeming

to make a semblance; for I am to wear a sword, and have appointed two aides de-camp, my nephews, George and Horace Churchill. If I *fall*, as ten to one but I do, to be sure it will be a superb tumble, at the feet of a Queen and eight daughters of Kings; for, besides the six Princesses, I am to have the Duchess of York and the Princess of Orange! Woe is me, at seventy-eight, and with scarce a hand and foot to my back! Adieu! Yours, &c.

A Poor Old Remnant.

2634. TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, July 7, 1795.

I am not dead of fatigue with my Royal visitors, as I expected to be, though I was on my poor lame feet three whole hours. Your daughter [Mrs. Damer], who kindly assisted me in doing the honours, will tell you the particulars, and how prosperously I succeeded. The Queen was uncommonly condescending and gracious, and deigned to drink my health when I presented her with the last glass, and to thank me for all my attentions. Indeed my memory *de la vieille cour* was but once in default. As I had been assured that her Majesty would be attended by her Chamberlain, yet was not, I had no glove ready when I received her at the step of her coach: yet she honoured me with her hand to lead her up stairs; nor did I recollect my omission when I led her down again. Still, though gloveless, I did not squeeze the royal hand, as Vice-chamberlain Smith did to Queen Mary.[1]

You will have stared, as I did, at the Elector of Hanover deserting his ally the King of Great Britain, and making peace with the monsters. But Mr. Fawkener, whom I saw at my sister's [Churchill's] on Sunday, laughs at the article in the newspapers, and says it is not an unknown practice for stock-jobbers to hire an emissary at the rate of five hundred pounds, and dispatch to Franckfort, whence he brings forged attestations of some marvellous political event, and spreads it on 'Change, which produces such a fluctuation in the stocks as amply overpays the expense of his mission.

[1] It is said that Queen Mary asked some of her attendant ladies what a squeeze of the hand was supposed to intimate. They said "Love." "Then," said the Queen, "my Vice-chamberlain must be violently in love with me, for he always squeezes my hand."—Wright.

This was all I learnt in the single night I was in town. I have not read the new French constitution, which seems longer than probably its reign will be. The five sovereigns will, I suppose, be the first guillotined. Adieu! Yours ever.

2635. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 11, 1795.

From the little finger of my left, through all that hand, wrist, and elbow, I am a line of gout, Madam; and t'other morning waked with such a rheumatism in arm ditto, that I could not turn in my bed; having, I suppose, caught cold by being brought to town the day before, though, as I thought, extremely swaddled.

This account, Madam, which Kirgate is forced to write, would be a full answer to the latter part of your Ladyship's letter; but it would be uncivil not to say a word to the intelligence of the meeting at Bedford, which I own does not alarm me, though it might flatter a young Duke, if he has not yet learnt that 2,000 neighbours of a very rich peer will huzza to anything he condescends to say to them, and will sign their names, which they love to do if they can write, though they don't understand a sentence of what he proposes to them. But how many of his mob does he imagine would, if he requested them, exchange their goosequills for firelocks, unless for the purpose of shooting his Grace's game and venison?

I am sorry he is so un- or so ill-advised. Methinks his Grace has lived long enough to have seen how men, who have vented their first outrageous fire in politics, can recant their declamations, and wind up their dregs with shame and pensions.

But I will step out of my buskins, and you shall allow me to smile at your exhortation. You tell me it is my *duty* to go to the House and make a speech. Alas! I doubt, Madam. Duty gleams but very dimly when one is at the threshold of fourscore. Your other arguments strike me still more faintly: as I have none of the great abilities and renown of the late Lord Chatham, so I have none of the ambition of aping his death and tumbling down in the House of Lords, which I fear would scarce obtain for me a sixpenny print in a magazine from Mr. Copley.[1]

The best use I have made of my very long life, has been to

[1] Copley painted a large and clever picture (now in the National Gallery) of the death of Lord Chatham.—Cunningham.

treasure up beacons to warn me against being ridiculous in my old age. I remember I was in bed with the gout, some years ago, when I was told that the late Duke of Northumberland had been at St. James's that morning to kiss hands for being appointed Master of the Horse to the King. I said, "Well, the Duke is three or four years older than I am, he has the gout as I have, and he has the stone, which thank God I have not. Now, should anybody come to my bedside, and propose to me to rise and drive about the streets in a gold glass-case, I should conclude they had heard I had lost my senses, though I had not discovered it myself."

Well, Madam, that path of glory was not suggested to me; but I have been more recently tempted to enter that Temple to which your Ladyship would send me. When my nephew died, Mrs. Epictetus Carter came and wished me joy of my new title, and said, "Now, I hope, you will go to the House of Lords and put down faro."

I have dictated, Madam, till I am quite exhausted, and most probably have tired your Ladyship, too, and begging your pardon, am for once, your most disobedient humble servant

2636. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 26, 1795.

Lord Orford is extremely obliged to Lord and Lady Ossory for their kind inquiries, but very sorry they give themselves that trouble, for there is so little amendment in his situation, and he is so very low and weak, that it is not worth while to detail particulars.

2637. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 14, 1796.

I flatter myself, or must bid adieu to all vanities, that your Ladyship will not be sorry to hear of my resurrection, which was decided in my favour by a few minutes on Saturday was s'ennight, by the rapid advance of a mortification in my bowels, so that I said to my surgeon, who was holding my clammy cold hand, "Am not I dying?" he replied in a despondent voice, "I hope not!" But my Herculean *weakness*, after a struggle of two days, saved me, and I am again in the land of living easy chairs, though still tossed into

bed by three servants; yet, after eleven weeks, the gout has quite left me, and had they any marrow left in them, I could use hands or feet. I don't mean indifferently, like Buckinger; but you see, I pay homage to your Ladyship with the first that revives, as you were pleased to order me to give you the first tolerable account of myself that I could. Here, then, I am again, having executed another portion of my death, which I have long reckoned every attack is doing. I have, as I told Lord Ossory ten days ago, patience enough, but I have not time enough for patience, my fits return too quick to leave me sufficient respite for recovery; but if I am totally disabled, I hope the passage will be but the easier!—I have gone through enough of the ceremony.

It is perhaps silly and impertinent to trouble your Ladyship with a detail of my own situation, yet, not having been able for above two months even to dictate a passable account of myself as you desired, I could not forget the years of correspondence with which you have honoured me, nor bear to seem neglectful of that grace, when I have a finger to express remembrance and gratitude. In fact, too, I have always observed that persons shut up from the world, and witnesses to few incidents but those which happen to themselves, grow to think those events of mighty moment, and to relate, as if novelties that could interest any mortal, even when passed and over. 'Tis pity I did not recollect this remark a page sooner!

Secluded as I have lived for weeks, surely events lusty enough and fresh enough have arrived to have pierced even to me, and to have tinged my thoughts with other hues than those all about myself; but pain, languor, a total extinction of voice that forbad my conversing, had rendered me inattentive: I seem to have awaked within a few days!—and what a mass of topics have I found to have been in agitation! Attacks on the King; storms and tempests for several successive months, yet all seeming to belong to summer rather than to winter; dispersion and destruction of navies without encounters; conquest of the Cape and of Trincomalee in an island with which I was well acquainted in my fairy-days, and which was then called *Serendip;* a princess born; *starvation* dreaded; most of the King's sons wandering about the world, the brother of the King of France lodged in Holyrood House; and the House of Orange in the palace of Hampton Court; the victories of Clairfait, his armistice, and for these last two days, the forged "French Gazette," announcing universal peace;—these (only the bigger outlines) might have shut

my lips about myself. And then for the town's *menus plaisirs*, there has been, and for a little longer will be the new brazen-fronted Shakspeare, to complete the triumvirate with Macpherson, *soi-disant* Ossian, and Chatterton. But none of these themes can be new to your Ladyship, and I will rest a weary hand, which for two days has been scrawling these two sides, and I doubt, not made them legible at last.

2638. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

DEAR SIR, *Berkeley Square, March* 19, 1796.

I WAS rejoiced to see your hand again,[1] though I am not yet able to answer it with mine, but I will as soon as I can scrawl out a letter, which you will be able to read, and which has not been possible for me to do these fifteen weeks: I have had a very bad fit of the gout for fifteen weeks in every limb. I still cannot walk across my room, but held up by two or three servants, and have to this moment five or six orifices venting chalk in one finger of my right hand, which is dressed every day by a surgeon; besides all this, I was very near going off towards the beginning of my illness by an inflammation in my bowels.

I am ashamed to trouble you with all this, especially when I was eager to thank you and reply particularly to your letter—that I must contrive to do myself, being happy that your sentiments agree so much with mine on the particular subject of your letter, though some singular circumstances, which I will explain at large, and which are well known to Lord Harcourt and Mr. Frederic Montagu will prevent my going farther than I have already done, though that has not been moderately neither, for I have been full as much offended as you are, and will point out to you more rocks of offence than you yet know, not forgetting the former subject.

This is all I can say till I can explain myself more at large, which I will do as fast as my weakness and miserable hand will let me. In the meantime I am with great sincerity and cordiality, dear Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,
ORFORD.

[1] This letter has not been printed, nor have I seen it.—CUNNINGHAM.

2639. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

DEAR SIR, *Berkeley Square, March* 22, 1796

I COULD not without using too many words express to you how very much I am offended and disgusted by Mr. Knight's new insolent and self-conceited Poem;[1] considering to what *height* he dares to carry his impious attack, it might be sufficient to lump all the rest of his impertinent sallies in one mass of censure as trifling peccadillos; but as you and I are personally interested to resent the liberties he has taken with our late great and respectable friend, I must if I can get through this letter enter more minutely into some detail.

The vanity of supposing that his authority, the authority of such a trumpery prosaic poetaster as Mr. Knight[2] was sufficient to re-establish the superannuated atheism of Lucretius, by his. His presuming to pronounce him the best of the Roman Poets, just as he allots the same rank to Sheridan over Gray and our first Bards, was I believe partly intended to establish a precedent for scores of his own wretched lines full of tautology, void of novelty, and his descriptions spun out to tediousness. In one respect he has executed justice on himself by his audacity in polluting Gray's *Champagne* and Heliconian element with his hog-wash: who that sips the latter after tasting the other can help rinsing his mouth? Nor is this his only violation of our immortal friend's ashes. He tells a silly falsehood of Gray being terrified from writing by Lloyd's and Colman's trash, that was squirted from the kennel against you both, forgetting (though affecting to revere Gray) the excellent letter to you on that occasion, about *Combustling*, derisory enough to have stopped their writing any more, instead of their checking him.

[1] 'The Landscape, a Didactic, in three Books, addressed to Uvedale Price, Esq., by R. Payne Knight," 4to., 1796.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] "Of course he [Lord Orford] talked to me of Mr. Knight's Poem, which is indeed a pompous nothing; and I am quite sure, that without ever having seen him, or heard what he had said about it, I should have stumbled upon the very same expressions when I returned it to the person who lent it to me, namely, '*That it was a didactic poem, without poetry, and which taught nothing.*' There is but a small part of this unpoetical poem which treats of the subject you expect from its title, and that little is sufficient to show that he does not understand it. The abuse of Brown is as coarse and illiberal, as it is cruel and unjust." *MS. Letter of Lord Harcourt to Mason.*—MITFORD.

I could make fifty other objections to this pretended and ill warranted dictator, for to all taste who Jacobinically would level the purity of gardens, would as malignantly as Tom Paine or Priestley guillotine Mr. Brown, and who to give a specimen of his own genius for gardening, the Lord knows how connected! has given in his 'Landscape' an ugly clumsy Etruscan brass milkpot as a model of the line of beauty.

Notwithstanding all I have said, I cannot engage in an open war with him, and beg not to be named in it. He is a great favourite of a very near relation of mine and intimate friend, with whom I have already had a warm altercation, and whom I should mortally disoblige, and through whom I have received several civilities from the person himself. I am besides too frank and open, and too much pleased and honoured by the revival of our correspondence to have any mean *reserve* with you, and therefore I acknowledge to you that weak and broken as I am, and tottering to the grave, at some months past seventy-eight, I have not spirits or courage enough to tap a paper-war, and what moderate abilities I may have had, are not less decayed than my limbs, and the labour I have forced myself to take to make this second page more legible than the first, which my poor fingers from such long disuse had almost forgotten to do, tells me how very helpless I am, and how unfit to engage in a controversy of any kind. In fact, repose without pain and a tranquil end is all I dare to wish, though pain I fear I must expect.

You, dear Sir, I would not divert from dethroning the usurper. I did ardently wish you had overturned and expelled out of gardens this new Priapus, who is only fit to be erected in the Palais de l'Egalité. But should you determine on a crusade against such infidels, I should rather wish you to employ your all puissant arms, irony and ridicule. Your sonnet would imply anger, and it is below your dignity to be provoked by this Knight of the Brazen Milk-Pot, who would be proud of having *you* for a serious antagonist. Indeed I doubt unless you make it ridiculous to read him, whether you may not help it off the bookseller's counter, where I hear it is likely to doze with other literati, till it takes its degrees in the university of waste paper.

Having been for three days carving this letter, which by extreme slowness and care I hope will not give you much trouble to decypher after the first page, which I scribbled with my ancient precipitation, till I found I could not read it myself. I will attempt no more at present, but to send you a parody on two lines of Mr. Knight, which

will show you that his poem is seen in its true light by a young man of allowed parts, Mr. Canning, whom I never saw. The originals are the two first lines at the top of page 5 :—

> "Some fainter irritations seem to feel
> Which o'er its languid fibres gently steal."—KNIGHT.
>
> "Cools the crimp'd cod, to pond-perch pangs imparts—
> Thrills the shelled shrimps and opens oysters' hearts."—CANNING.

However, I wish to see much superior wit, and far superior and genuine poetry lanced at the head of this marauder, and in any case I flatter myself our correspondence will not close again while there is a finger left of

Dear Sir,
Your sincere humble servant,
ORFORD.[1]

2640. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, July 12, 1796.

I CAN only thank your Ladyship by proxy, for a new mark of your accustomed kindness; for, though I am quite content with being here again, which I little expected to be any more, I cannot say I find any benefit by my removal. My fingers are rather worse than they were, and my ankle so weak that I cannot rest upon it a moment, though held up by two servants. But I have all my playthings about me; and, when one is arrived at one's second childhood, is not one fortunate enough in having them and being able to be amused by them? How many poor old wretches are there who suffer more, and who have none of my comforts and assistances, though probably deserving them, which is not my case!

I try to make my soaking hay my principal distress, for the news-

[1] Lord Orford died on the 2nd of March, 1797, and on the 10th Mr. Mason wrote to Mr. Stonhewer as follows:

"DEAR STONHEWER, *Aston, March* 10, 1797.

"I DON'T wonder that Lord Orford's death was not known to Mr. Montagu, for, strange to say, it was not published in the *Sun* (a paper he probably takes in), so that I did not know it till the day before I received yours of the 7th, where he was mentioned as the late Lord Orford having left 1000*l.* to the Duchess of Gloucester. As to his Will, it is full as rational a one as anybody had reason to expect; and as to the bequest of his papers, the Miss B[erry]s, or others, are the fittest to have them. I would not demean myself, or any of my friends, to solicit for my own letters, &c., so I let that subject rest."

On the 7th of the next month Mason himself died.—CUNNINGHAM.

papers are too vexatious; the Austrian campaign does not proceed with the rapidity from which I began to expect great matters; and the Gauls are again dictating to the Capitol. I was so silly as to be shocked at their plundering my favourite school, the Bolognese, though I should never have seen it again, when I had recollected that I have lost my own pictures at Houghton! What signifies whether Verres or Catherine Slay-Czar has a fine collection under the Pole or on the Place de la Guillotine?

2641. TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, Tuesday, Aug. 16, 1796.

THOUGH I this morning received your Sunday's full letter, it is three o'clock before I have a moment to begin answering it; and must do it myself, for Kirgate is not at home. First came in Mr. Barrett, and then Cosway,[1] who has been for some days at Mr. Udney's, with his wife:[2] she is so afflicted for her only little girl, that she shut herself up in her chamber, and would not be seen. The man Cosway does not seem to think that much of the loss belonged to him: he romanced with his usual vivacity. Next arrived Dr. Burney, on his way to Mrs. Boscawen. He asked me about deplorable 'Camilla.' Alas! I had not recovered of it enough to be loud in its praise. I am glad, however, to hear that she has realised about two thousand pounds; and the worth, no doubt, of as much in honours at Windsor; where she was detained three days, and where even Mons. D'Arblay was allowed to dine.

I rejoice at your bathing promising so well.[3] If the beautiful fugitive[4] from Brighthelmstone dips too, the waves will be still more salutary:—

Venus, orta Mari, mare præstat eunti.

I like your going to survey castles and houses: it is wholesomer than drawing and writing tomes of letters;—which you see I cannot do.[5]

[1] Richard Cosway, long familiarly known as the Macaroni miniature painter. He died in 1821.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] Maria Hadfield, a native of Italy, but of English parentage.—CUNNINGHAM.

[3] Miss Berry was at this time at Bognor, in Sussex.—CUNNINGHAM.

[4] The Countess of Jersey, mother to the present Earl.—WRIGHT.

[5] What follows is in Kirgate's handwriting. The original letter is in the British Museum. Addit. MS. 21,155.—CUNNINGHAM.

Wednesday, after breakfast.

When I came home from Lady Mendip's last night, I attempted to finish this myself; but my poor fingers were so tired by all the work of the day, that it will require Sir William Jones's gift of tongues to interpret my pot-hooks. One would think Arabic characters were catching; for Agnes had shown me a volume of their poems, finely printed at Cambridge, with a version which Mr. Douglas had lent to her, and said were very simple, and not in the inflated style of the East. You shall judge: in the first page I opened, I found a storm of lightning that had burst into a horse laugh. —I resume the thread of my letter. You had not examined Arundel Castle enough; for you do not mention the noble monuments, in alabaster, of the Fitz-Alans, one of whom bragged of having married Adeliza, widow of Henry the First. In good sooth, they were somewhat defaced by Cromwell having mounted his cannon on the roof to batter the castle; of which, when I saw it, he had left little but ruins; and they were choked up by a vile modern brick house, which I know Solomon[1] has pulled down: for he came hither two years ago to consult me about Gothicising his restoration of the castle. I recommended Mr. Wyatt, lest he should copy the Temple of Jerusalem.

So you found a picture of your predecessor![2] She had had a good figure: but I had rather it had been a portrait of her aunt, Mrs. Arabella Fermor, the heroine of the Lock, of whom I never saw a resemblance. You did not, I suppose, see the giant, who, the very old Duke told me, used to walk among the ruins, but who, to be sure, Duke Solomon has laid in a Red Sea of claret.

There are other splendid seats to be seen within your reach; as Petworth and Standstead, and Up-Park: but I know why I guess that you may even be of parties, more than once, at the last.

As Agnes says, she has promised I should give you an account of a visit I have lately had, I will, if I have time, before anybody comes in. It was from a Mr. Pentycross, a clergyman and schoolmaster of Wallingford, of whom I had heard nothing for eight-and-twenty years; and then having only known him as a Blue-coat boy from

[1] Charles Howard, Duke of Norfolk [1786—1815]; so called by Lord Orford, for having his portrait executed in painted glass for the window of his great dining-room, at Arundel Castle, as Solomon entertaining the Queen of Sheba.—Wright.

[2] A portrait of Margaret Rolle, Countess of Orford, widow of the eldest brother of Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford. She died in 1781; the Earl, her husband, in 1751.—Cunningham.

Kingston: and how that happened, he gave me this account last week. He was born with a poetic impetus, and walked over hither with a copy of verses by no means despicable, which he begged old Margaret to bring up to me. She refused; he supplicated. At last she told him that her master was very learned, and that, if he would write something in the learned languages, especially in French, she would present his poem to me. In the mean time she yielded; I saw him, and let her show him the house. I think he sent me an ode or two afterwards, and I never heard his name again till this winter, when I received a letter from him from his place of residence, with high compliments on some of my editions, and beseeching me to give him a print of myself, which I did send to him. In the Christmas holidays he came to town for a few days, and called in Berkeley-square; but it was when I was too ill to see anybody. He then left a most modest and humble letter, only begging that, some time or other, I would give him leave to see Strawberry Hill. I sent him a note by Kirgate, that should he come to town in summer, and I should be well enough, he should certainly see my house. Accordingly, about a fortnight ago, I let him know, that if he could fix any day in this month, I would give him a dinner and a bed. He jumped at the offer, named Wednesday last, and came. However, I considered that to pass a whole day with this unknown being might be rather too much. I got Lysons, the parson, from Putney, to meet him: but it would not have been necessary, for I found my Blue-coat boy grown to be a very sensible, rational, learned, and remaining a most modest personage, with an excellent taste for poetry—for he is an enthusiast for Dr. Darwin: but, alas! infinitely too learned for me; for in the evening, upon questioning him about his own vein of poetry, he humbly drew out a paper, with proposition forty-seven of Euclid turned into Latin verse. I shrunk back and cried, "Oh! dear Sir, how little you know me! I have forgotten almost the little Latin I knew, and was always so incapable of learning mathematics, that I could not even get by heart the multiplication-table, as blind Professor Sanderson[1] honestly told me, above threescore years ago, when I went to his lectures at Cambridge." After the first fortnight, he said to me, "Young man, it would be cheating you to take your money; for you never can learn what I am trying to teach you." I was exceedingly mortified, and cried;

[1] See Walpole's 'Short Notes,' in vol. i. p. lxii. of this edition of his 'Letters.'—CUNNINGHAM.

for, being a Prime Minister's son, I had firmly believed all the flattery with which I had been assured that my parts were capable of anything. I paid a private instructor for a year; but, at the year's end, was forced to own Sanderson had been in the right; and here luckily ends, with my paper, my Penticrusade.

2642. TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 24, 1796.

Bathe on, bathe on and wash away all your complaints; the sea air and such an oriental season must cure everything but positive decay and decrepitude. On me they have no more effect than they would have on an Egyptian queen who has been embowelled and preserved in her sycamore etui ever since dying was first invented, and people notwithstanding liked to last for ever, though even in a pyramid. In short, Mr. —— has teased me so much about jumbling my relics, that I have aired them every morning in the coach for this fortnight; and yet, you see,[1] I cannot write ten lines together! Lady Cecilia lets me call on her at twelve, and take her with me: and yet I grow tired of it, and shall not have patience to continue, but shall remain, I believe, in my mummyhood. I begin by giving myself a holiday to-day, in order to answer your letter of the 21st; while Lady Waldegrave, who is with me, and who has brought her eldest son, whom, poor soul! she cannot yet bear to call Lord Waldegrave,[2] is gone to the Pavilion.[3] Here is a letter for you from Hannah More, unsealed indeed, for chiefly *à mon intention*. Be so good as to tell her how little I am really recovered; but that I will hammer out a few words as fast, that is, as slowly as I can to her, in return.

I am scandalised at the slovenly neglect of the brave chapel of the Fitz-Alans.[4] I thought the longer any peer's genealogy had been spun out, the prouder he was of the most ancient coronets in it; but since Solomon despises the Arundels for not having been Dukes, I suppose he does not acknowledge Adam for a relation;

[1] The remainder of this letter is in the handwriting of Kirgate.—Wright.

[2] Her eldest son George, fifth Earl of Waldegrave, was drowned, 20th June, 1794, in the Thames, near Eton; her *then* eldest son, born 30th July, 1785, was the sixth earl.—Cunningham.

[3] The 'Pavilion,' at Hampton Court, the seat of her mother, the Duchess of Gloucester.—Cunningham.

[4] In Arundel church, Sussex.—Cunningham.

who, though he had a tolerably numerous progeny, his grace does not allow to have been the patriarch of the Mowbrays and Howards, as the devil did not make Eve a Duchess, though he has made the wives of some other folks so, and may propose to make one more so some time or other.

News I have none; but that Wurmsur seems to have put a little spoke into the wheel of the French triumphal car in Italy: and as those banditti have deigned to smile on the Duke of Wirtemberg, I suppose they mean to postpone imposing a heavy contribution on him till he shall have received the fortune of the Princess Royal. Adieu!

2643. TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 29, 1796.

You are not only the most beneficent, but the most benevolent of human beings. Not content with being a perfect saint yourself, which (forgive me for saying) does not always imply prodigious compassion for others; not satisfied with being the most disinterested, nay, the reverse of all patriots, for you sacrifice your very slender fortune, not to improve it, but to keep the poor honest instead of corrupting them; and you write politics as simply, intelligibly, and unartfully, not as cunningly as you can to mislead. Well, with all these giant virtues, you can find room and time in your heart and occupations for harbouring and exercising what those monkeys of pretensions, the French, invented and called *les petites morales,* which were to supply society with filigrain duties, in the room of all virtues, which they abolished on their road to the adoption of philosophy and atheism. Yes, though for ever busied in exercising services and charities for individuals, or for whole bodies of people, you do not leave a cranny empty into which you can slip a kindness. Your inquiry after me to Miss Berry is so friendly, that I cannot trust solely to her thanking you for your letter, as I am sure she will, having sent it to her as she is bathing in the sea at Bognor Rocks; but I must with infinite gratitude give you a brief account of myself—a very poor one indeed must I give. Condemned as a cripple to my couch for the rest of my days I doubt I am. Though perfectly healed, and even without a scar, my leg is so weakened that I have not recovered the least use of it, nor can move across my chamber unless lifted up and held by two servants. This

constitutes me totally a prisoner. But why should not I be so? What business had I to live to the brink of seventy-nine? And why should one litter the world at that age? Then, I thank God, I have vast blessings; I have preserved my eyes, ears, and teeth; I have no pain left; and I would bet with any dormouse that it cannot outsleep me. And when one can afford to pay for every relief, comfort, or assistance that can be procured at fourscore, dares one complain? Must not one reflect on the thousands of old poor, who are suffering martyrdom, and have none of those alleviations? O, my good friend, I must consider myself as at my best; for if I drag on a little longer, can I expect to remain even so tolerably? Nay, does the world present a pleasing scene? Are not the devils escaped out of the swine, and overrunning the earth headlong?

What a theme for meditation, that the excellent humane Louis Seize should have been prevented from saving himself by that monster Drouet, and that that execrable wretch should be saved even by those, some of whom one may suppose he meditated to massacre; for at what does a Frenchman stop? But I will quit this shocking subject, and for another reason too: I omitted one of my losses, almost the use of my fingers: they are so lame that I cannot write a dozen lines legibly, but am forced to have recourse to my secretary. I will only reply by a word or two to a question you seem to ask; how I like 'Camilla?' I do not care to say how little. Alas! she has reversed experience, which I have long thought reverses its own utility by coming at the wrong end of our life when we do not want it. This author [Miss Burney] knew the world and penetrated characters before she had stepped over the threshold; and, now she has seen so much of it, she has little or no insight at all: perhaps she apprehended having seen too much, and kept the bags of foul air that she brought from the Cave of Tempests too closely tied.

Adieu, thou who mightest be one of the cleverest of women if thou didst not prefer being *one* of the best! And when I say *one* of the best, I have not engaged my vote for the second. Yours most gratefully.

2644. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 2, 1796.

HABITUATED as I am, Madam, to your Ladyship's kindness, for I will not say how many lustrums, can I be surprised at your repeating marks of it to my last hours, even after I have no longer the power of answering it with my own hand, which I could not do with any limb, unless, like Buckinger, I could write with my stumps. From pain, I thank God, I am free, but in no other respect, at all recovered; nor expect to be. I am pinned to my couch, and only move from one side of my room to the other, like a coat of arms, by two supporters; and even my motto of *fari quæ sentiat*, you see, Madam, I must deliver by a herald.

I will say no more of myself, but to apply part of what I have said to Lord Holland's much too flattering mention of me. While I do remain here, I shall be happy to be of any use to him: a superannuated invalid would be a very unfit correspondent for a young man of his genius; though I shall be most ready to answer any questions he pleases to ask me, or to give him any information I can about past times, as far as my memory will let me, though much decay there must have accompanied my other defects at seventy-nine, though love of babbling at that age is not a common failure, nor, I fear, one of mine. Old men are apt to think that the moment at which they entered into the great world, was the brightest and most agreeable period possible, and that everything has declined as their contemporaries have gone off. I have not contracted that opinion, for, though the names Lord Holland has found amongst his papers were those of shining men, I have lived to see more marvellous talents of an earlier age, though the felicity of those times makes me prefer the recollection of them to the present.

Our harvests have been gorgeous, Madam, indeed; even our farmers acknowledge it—the least they could do to compensate for the scarcity they proclaimed last year, and in part, I believe, only feigned. I wish plenty may be followed by peace: *I* am particularly, at this moment, lamenting one consequence of the war, not from weapons, but by the yellow fever of the West Indies, which has carried off a most meritorious nephew of mine, George Churchill. He was a major-general, and so very spirited and brave a young man, that every letter which during his campaigns was loud in his

praise, frequently drew tears of joy from his father. I had flattered myself, from his aptitude and ability in his profession, that he would prove a second immortal Churchill: alas! immortality has a sad chance in a bad climate! This reflection has persuaded me to be of the opinion of those who have supposed that America was a very juvenile continent when first discovered. I never heard that Jamaica bragged of having produced patriarchs, Methusalems, Nestors, or old Parrs.

2645. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 17, 1796.

I AM exceedingly obliged by your ladyship's congratulation on the supposed safety of my nephew; but alas! I am far from being convinced of it myself, nor am I yet certain that his poor parents are satisfied of it.

I will assuredly, Madam, give what answers I can to Lord Holland's questions, when I have had a little time to recollect myself; but on reading them over, I fear my replies will be very imperfect, for on opening the old cupboard of my memory, I perceived its contents were sadly confused; and there is even one person inquired after, a Mr. Wigan, whose person, or even name, I do not recollect, nor ever to have heard of his poetry; but I will scrape together what remnants of recollection I can, and endeavour not to remember too minutely, as old folks are apt to do, what passed in their earlier days, not because the circumstances were worth being preserved, but because they had happened in *their* time. However, as I can only dictate my remembrances, it will check my garrulity a little. Mercy on Lord Holland, if I were to answer him by word of mouth, for every trifling fact in ancient memories touches the chord of some other, and produces a genealogy of gossiping!

2646. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 30, 1796.

I RETURN your Ladyship, with many thanks, Lord Holland's pretty, easy verses, but am sorry he has turned his talent to Greek poetry, of which, if honoured with a sight, I should not under-

stand a line, having forgotten my Greek these forty years. The conclusion to the lady is extremely *genteel*, and there is great ingenuity in rhyming the absurd whims of the Florentine philosopher. I look upon paradoxes as the impotent efforts of men, who, not having capacity to draw attention and celebrity by good sense, fly to eccentricities to make themselves pointed out. It was the delirium of J. J. Rousseau, who possessing a superiority of genius that might have carried common sense to its highest perfection, often distorted by contradicting it and wasted on tricks and *charlatanerie*, meditations that might have led to the noblest discoveries. While we do know so little, have cause to wish to know so much, and have the calamity of acquiescing in so many errors that might perhaps be exploded to the comfort of mankind, I do not think we are arrived at that period of the world when science and knowledge have nothing better to do than to discover, alter, and correct, the regular order of creation, and the mechanism and habits of the universe and its elements.

Now, Madam, with regard to Lord Holland's commissions. Fortunately I have had a visit from Lord Macartney, and have transmitted through him my excuses to Lord Holland, not only for delaying to answer his queries, but in reality to beg he will dispense with my answering them in writing. Listen to my case, Madam: when I came to rummage in the old chest of my memory, I found it so full of rubbish that when I came to set down the contents, some of which were imperfect remnants, I grew ashamed, and found I should be writing an Atalantis; and though I should, like Brantôme, protest that all my heroines were *très dignes et très vertueuses princesses*, I should nevertheless be forming a *chronique scandaleuse*, and not a very delicate one, were I to answer to all the queries which relate to a principal performer, Lord Hervey. Still *his* history (*with whom* and with much of which I was well acquainted), was so curious, that I begged Lord Macartney to tell Lord Holland, that if when I go to town he will honour me with his company for half an hour (out of decency I must not mention a longer space of time, though there is no trusting to an old gossip cock or hen, if you tap their bag of ancient tales) I will satisfy his curiosity as briefly as I can contrive to do, and without a tittle of invention, which at seventy-nine I assure him I do not possess. His and your Ladyship's most obedient, &c.

2647. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Berkeley Square, Tuesday night, Nov. 6, 1796.

Lord Orford was struck last Thursday night by the intense cold, which first flung him into a violent vomiting, and then gave him great pain in both legs, which turned into an inflammation the next day in the right leg, and seemed tending to an abscess like that he had in the other leg last year. In this state he was brought to town on Friday last, with scarce the sound of a voice, and where he is now lying on a couch in a state of weakness and age, that keeps him from seeing anybody, and makes him incapable of conversing on any subjects, public or private.

* * * * * *

All I can possibly do now, Madam, is to tell your ladyship, for the information of Mr. Watts, that Mr. Gough's second volume of 'Sepulchral Monuments of Great Britain' is come out within these very few days. He had sent it to me, and I found it on my table, and it is the most stupendous and largest volume, I believe, ever seen on this side of Brobdignag, and crammed with prints of all the brasses of the sons of Anak. In vol. ii. p. 309, begins a minute account in that and several subsequent pages, of the tombs of the Percys in Beverley Minster, with quotations from the Bishop of Dromore, as I foretold. My surgeon flatters me that by fumigations, and the measures he has used, I am likely to escape a wound in my leg.

Well, it may be so; but your ladyship must give me a little time, and let me retire for rest into a closet in my coffin.

2648. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 13, 1796.

I have very few leaves left, indeed, Madam, and feel how fast they fall! Your ladyship's remembrance of the perishing old trunk still, I see with gratitude, hangs upon it and honours it like a trophy, when a severe new blast has sadly shaken it! I had loved the Duchess of Richmond most affectionately from the moment I first knew her, when she was but five years old; her sweet temper and unalterable good nature had made her retain a friendship for and confidence in me that was more steady than I ever found in any

other person to whom I have been the most attached. It is a heavy blow! I had flattered myself the last time I saw her five months ago, for she came to me twice when I was so extremely ill last winter in town, that she would recover. She has languished ever since, suffered terribly, as much as could be discovered under her invincible patience and silence; but she is gone, and I am still here, though above twenty years older!

The Duke, who is exceedingly afflicted, and retains all her servants, and pensioned them all for their lives, has sent me, as the dear soul had desired him, one of her own rings. I can never put it on my swelled fingers, but I will for ever carry it about me, while there is any *for ever for me!*

Forgive me, my dear Lady, for not being able to restrain this gush of grief when my heart was full, and you put the pen into my hand. Though so painful to me to write, I could not have the patience to dictate—but I must take another day before I can finish.

Monday 14*th.*

I am come to town to-day, Madam, for two days, to see Lady Ailesbury and Mrs. Damer, who are returned from their afflicting attendance on the poor dear Duchess to the last; her sister was the only person she knew in those sad moments. But I will say no more; it is not generous to return your Ladyship's kindness by venting my sorrows on you, who cannot be interested in them.

As you mention Lord Holland, I have heard that he is going to live in Holland House, and to new furnish it, on which occasion I was desired to beg Lord Ossory to tell him that Mr. Samuel Lysons is having beautiful carpets made of very large dimensions from the Roman pavements, which he has lately discovered in Gloucestershire, and of which, by their own orders, he has carried drawings to the queen and princesses, and which I should think would be handsome ornaments for the spacious rooms at Holland House.

I cannot say that I admire Mr. Burke's pamphlet so much as I expected, especially as I agree with him in not liking our homage to the Pandæmonium. Parts to me are very obscure: the justice done to the character and firmness of King William is noble, but not a little damaged and contradicted in the sequel, by telling the Directory that perseverance must succeed, and that a great country can never want resources. If they take those hints, I hope they will find that he is no prophet on all sides.

For my part I know nothing, but have made one remark as a great novelty in the present times; there is both a King and a Queen dead without being murdered.

2649. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 20, 1796.

Oh! Madam, you remember that I have been an antiquary, but you forget that I am a superannuated one, on the verge of fourscore, and that now I know no more of what people did, and what garb they wore five hundred years ago than if I had lived in their time, or were acquainted with the modes in vogue at present. If I had the impudence of an oracle, or could coin equivocal answers extempore, I might expound Gothic rebusses at Beverley: but alack! Madam, I have lost my craft, and cannot even recollect why King Stephen rated his chamberlain for charging him all too dear for a new pair of hosen. You may judge how unfit I am grown to solve ancient symbols; for three days ago I received a portly quarto inscribed 'History of Kingston on Hull,' and little did I conceive that it meant the town of Hull and not of my little neighbour Kingston.

In short, my dear Madam, I am very sorry for being so unable to assist your Ladyship's friend's friend in decyphering the queries on which he does me the honour of consulting me about the Minster at Beverley; but I will put him as well as I can into the way of getting some information. I know nothing of the conjunction between the Percys and the Hothams, but I dare to say that Dr. Percy, the present Bishop of Dromore, who has taken true pains to adopt himself into the line of the former, can tell exactly when they conjoined;and what form of shoes the majesties of those times wore will probably be to be known before Christmas, for Mr. Gough is at the eve of publishing his second volume of 'British Monuments,' wherein probably will be displayed figures of all the parts of all ancient royal wardrobes.

You see, Madam, that it is not from idleness, but from real ignorance, that I give your Ladyship's friend such poor information: having outlived my vocation, I can furnish nothing but its ashes.

Give me leave to correct a blunder I made in my last; I mentioned *carpets* made from Mr. Lysons' Mosaic pavements; I ought to have said *oil-cloths*, which cost a great deal less.

2650. TO RICHARD GOUGH, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, *Berkeley Square, Dec.* 5, 1796.

BEING struck with the extreme cold of last week, it has brought a violent gouty inflammation into one of my legs, and I was forced to be instantly brought to town very ill. As soon as I was a little recovered, I found here your most magnificent present of the second volume of 'Sepulchral Monuments,' the most splendid work I ever saw, and which I congratulate myself on having lived long enough to see. Indeed, I congratulate my country on its appearance exactly at so illustrious a moment, when the patriotism and zeal of London have exhibited so astonishing marks of their opulence and attachment to the constitution, by a voluntary subscription of seventeen millions of money in three days. Your book, Sir, appearing at that very instant, will be a monument of a fact so unexampled in history; the treasure of fine prints with which it is bestowed, well becomes such a production and such a work, the expense of which becomes it too. I am impatient to be able to sit up and examine it more, and am sure my gratitude will increase in proportion. As soon as I shall receive the complete sheets, I will have the whole work bound in the most superb manner that can be: and though, being so infirm now, and just entered into my eightieth year, I am not likely to wait on you, and thank you, I shall be happy to have an opportunity, whenever you come this way, of telling you in person how much I am charmed with so splendid a monument of British glories, and which will be so proud an ornament to the Libraries of any nation.

2651. TO MISS BERRY.

Thursday, December 15, *past noon*, 1796.

I HAD no account of you at all yesterday, but in Mrs. Damer's letter, which was rather better than the preceding; nor have I had any letter before post to-day, as you promised me in hers. I had, indeed, a humorous letter from a puss[1] that is about your house,

[1] This was written by Miss Seton, in the name of a kitten at Little Strawberry Hill, with whose gambols Lord Orford had been much amused.—M.B.

which is more comfortable; as I think she would not have written cheerfully if you had not been in a good way. I would answer it, but I am grown a dull old Tabby, and have no "Quips and cranks and wanton wiles" left; but I shall be glad to see her when she follows you to town, which I earnestly hope will not pass Saturday. My horses will be with you on Friday night.

The House of Commons sat till half an hour after three this morning, on Mr. Pitt's loan to the Emperor; when it was approved by a majority of above two hundred. Mr. Fox was more temperate than was expected; Mr. Grey did not speak; Mr. Sheridan was very entertaining: several were convinced and voted for Mr. Pitt, who had gone down determined against it. The Prince came to town t'other day ill, was blooded twice, but has now a strong eruption upon his skin, which will probably be of great service to him. Sir Charles Blagden has been with the Duchess of Devonshire, and found her much better than he expected. Her look is little altered: she suffers but little, and finds herself benefited by being electrified.

I have received a compliment to-day very little expected by a superannuated old Etonian. Two tickets from the gentlemen of Westminster School, for their play on Monday next. I excused myself as civilly and respectfully as I could, on my utter impossibility of attending them. Adieu! I hope this will be the last letter I shall write before I see you.[1]

[1] Very soon after the date of the above letter, the gout, the attacks of which were every day becoming more frequent and longer, made those with whom Lord Orford had been living at Strawberry Hill very anxious that he should remove to Berkeley-square, to be nearer assistance, in case of any sudden seizure. As his correspondents, soon after his removal, were likewise established in London, no more letters passed between them. When not immediately suffering from pain, his mind was tranquil and cheerful. He was still capable of being amused, and of taking some part in conversation; but, during the last weeks of his life, when fever was superadded to his other ills, his mind became subject to the cruel hallucination of supposing himself neglected and abandoned by the only persons to whom his memory clung, and whom he always desired to see. In vain they recalled to his recollection how recently they had left him, and how short had been their absence: it satisfied him for the moment, but the same idea recurred as soon as he had lost sight of them. At last, nature sinking under the exhaustion of weakness, obliterated all ideas but those of mere existence, which ended, without a struggle, on the 2nd of March, 1797. M.B.

2652. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.[1]

Berkeley Square, Jan. 4, 1797.

Well, Madam, little as I expected it would happen, the French have seriously intended to invade *us*, or rather *you*, but so clumsily, that we may rejoice at the experiment; and had we had a little more luck, we might have captured half their expedition, and may still hear of their having lost many of their ships. Seven had nearly fallen into the mouth of Colpoys, but were saved by a fog; those that lay for three days in Bantry Bay took a sudden panic and fled, as if they had just recollected that no venomous creature can live in Ireland. Indeed, whatever invitation they might have received, they were received very inhospitably, not a single crew of a ship was asked to land and drink a glass of whiskey, but the whole country was ready to rise and knock their brains out. Those that retired were pursued by two violent storms, and have probably suffered like a mightier Armada. It is supposed that this disappointed invasion was one motive to the interruption of the pacification, though so wretchedly equipped, and so little consonant to the poverty of which they have talked so much lately, and which has made me recollect an expression which my father used on the mobs which were raised by the distillers against his Excise bill, whom he called *sturdy beggars*, words re-echoed in a thousand libels.

Another motive for the dismission of Lord Malmesbury, is supposed to be the death of Catherine Slay-Czar; but even that does not seem to promise much favour to the regicides, for the new emperor has already sent a gracious message by Simonin to Louis XVIII., though not very partial to his mother, since he has buried her by his father's side, as if to recall the memory of his murder. Queen Elizabeth had the sense not to vindicate Anne Boleyn.

So much for big politics: I am in your Ladyship's debt for your last inquiries after me: I am quite out of pain, and full as well as I am ever likely to be; walk again I never shall, but my invulnerable

[1] Upon the MS. of this letter is written, in Lady Ossory's hand, "Lord Orford's last letter but one in his own hand-writing." It is remarkably firm and clear, but appears to me more like the hand of Kirgate, which was an evident imitation of his master's. It is much stronger and younger than that of November 13, 1796, which he says was his own writing.—R. Vernon Smith.

stomach, my pulse that beats the tattoo as strongly and regularly as a young soldier, and the governor of my citadel, I mean my Sergeant-Surgeon Mr. Huitson, who watches me incessantly, has removed the inflammation from my leg, and I may last a little longer —if to see France humbled, I shall be glad. I have great faith in our Neptune, Lord Spencer, but even if he should destroy the French marine, I shall dread our making a scandalous peace, like those of Utrecht and Paris.

2653. TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

My dear Madam, *Jan.* 15, 1797.

You distress me infinitely by showing my idle notes, which I cannot conceive can amuse anybody. My old fashioned breeding impels me every now and then to reply to the letters you honour me with writing, but in truth very unwillingly, for I seldom can have anything particular to say; I scarce go out of my own house, and then only to two or three very private places, where I see nobody that really knows anything, and what I learn comes from Newspapers, that collect intelligence from coffee-houses, consequently what I neither believe nor report. At home I see only a few charitable elders, except about four-score nephews and nieces of various ages, who are each brought to me about once a-year, to stare at me as the Methusalem of the family, and they can only speak of their own contemporaries, which interest me no more than if they talked of their dolls, or bats and balls. Must not the result of all this, Madam, make me a very entertaining correspondent? And can such letters be worth showing? or can I have any spirit when so old and reduced to dictate?

Oh! my good Madam, dispense with me from such a task, and think how it must add to it to apprehend such letters being shown. Pray send me no more such laurels, which I desire no more than their leaves when decked with a scrap of tinsel and stuck on twelfth-cakes that lie on the shop-boards of pastry-cooks at Christmas. I shall be quite content with a sprig of rosemary thrown after me, when the parson of the parish commits my dust to dust. Till then, pray, Madam, accept the resignation of your

Ancient servant,

Orford.

ADDITIONAL LETTERS.



SIR ROBERT WALPOLE, & CATHERINE SHORTER, HIS FIRST WIFE.

ADDITIONAL LETTERS.

2654. TO GEORGE MONTAGU.[1]

Mistley, July 14, 1748.

I CAME hither [Mr. Rigby's] yesterday, having stayed but three days in London, which is a desert; but in those three days, and from all those Nobodies, I heard the history of Lord Coke three thousand different ways. I expect next winter to hear of no Whigs and Jacobites, no courtiers and patriots, but of the Cokes and the Campbells. I do assure you, the violence is incredible with which this affair is talked over; as the Irish mobs used to cry, Butleraboo and Crumaboo, you will see the women in the assemblies will be hallooing Campbellaboo! But with the leave of their violence, I think the whole affair of sending Harry Ballenden first to bully Coke, and then to murder him, is a very shocking story, and so bad that I will not believe Lady Mary's family could go so far as to let her into the secret of an intention to pistol her husband. I heard the relation in an admirable way at first, from my Lady Suffolk, who is one of the ringleaders of the Campbellaboos, and, indeed, a woful story she made of it for poor Coke, interlarding it every minute with very villanous epithets bestowed on his lordship by Noll Bluff, and when she had run over her string of rascal, scoundrel, &c., she would stop and say, "Lady Dorothy, do I tell your story right; for you know I am very deaf, and perhaps did not hear it exactly." I have compiled all that is allowed on both sides, and it is very certain, for Coke's honour, that his refusing to fight was till he could settle the affair of his debts. But two or three wicked circumstances on t'other side, never to be got over, are Ballenden's stepping close up

[1] Now first published.—CUNNINGHAM

to him after Coke had fired his last pistol, and saying, "You little dog, now I will be the death of you," and firing, but the pistol missed; and what confirms the intention of these words is, its having come out that the Duke of Argyll knew that Coke, on having been told that his Grace complained of his usage of Lady Mary, replied, "Very well; does he talk! Why, it is impossible I should use my wife worse than he did his!" When Harry Ballenden left Coke on the road from Sunning the day before the duel, he crossed over to the Duke, which his Grace flatly denied, but Lord Gower proved it to his face. I have no doubt but a man who would dispatch his wife, would have no scruple at the assassination of a person that should reproach him with it.

I don't like your not wanting me at the Tygers. I think I shall scarce go if you don't, unless the Duchess of Queensberry drives me from Strawberry Hill, as is very probable, for t'other night we met her coming from making me a visit. She had been up stairs, and wrote a card that began, "She has been to see Mr. W." I have another distress; my brother Ned's eldest girl has come to Mrs. Scott's, the painter's wife, at next door. The child is in a consumption; and seeing her so ill-lodged, I could not help offering her my house, for I can't be angry when I see people unhappy. I found afterwards that my brother had intended to borrow it while I am here. I can conceive forgiveness; I can conceive using people ill; but how does one feel to use anybody very ill without provocation, and then ask favours of them? Well, he must think of that: I shall be glad if I can save the poor girl's life.

My compliments to all your house. I have not got the fish, for t'other brother has sent me word they must not be disturbed. Stuff! He will borrow my house next.

Yours, &c.,
H. W.

I had almost forgot to tell you a pleasant bit. I had been to visit the Vere Beauclerks, at Hanworth [in Middlesex], and had pried about for a portrait of the black grandmother, but to no purpose. As to old Chambers's black leg, I did not expect to find him stepping it forth like the King of Clubs. I went another evening with Mrs. Leneve; Lady Vere then carried us into all the lodging-rooms; over one private bed-chamber chimney, what did I view but the most deplorable sooty gentlewoman that was ever beheld. I immediately guessed that this was the Black-Horse Maid flattered,



DOROTHY WALPOLE.

for it was not absolutely negro. I asked, Mrs. Leneve hemmed and coughed, and was ready to die. Lady Vere answered, "It was her grandmother's picture, a Portuguese, that her grandfather had married at Fort St. George—a very bad likeness." Adieu! Rigby sends you a great many compliments. We call his black nothing but the Portuguese.

2655. TO MR. ROBERT DODSLEY.[1]

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 4, 1753.

I AM sorry you think it any trouble to me to peruse your poem again; I always read it with pleasure. One or two little passages I have taken the liberty to mark and to offer you alterations; page 79 I would read *thrust to thrust;* I believe *push* is scarce a substantive of any authority. Line 449, and line 452, should I think be corrected, as ending with prepositions, disjoined from the cases they govern. I don't know whether you will think my emendations for the better. I beg in no wise that you will adopt any of them out of complaisance; I only suggest them to you at your desire, and am far from insisting on them. I most heartily wish you the success you so well deserve, and am

Your very humble servant,
HOR. WALPOLE.

P.S.—I shall beg you to send me a piece I see advertised, called, 'A True Account of Andrew Frey,' &c.

2656. TO HORACE WALPOLE (THE WRITER'S UNCLE).[2]

Arlington Street, April 13, 1756.

MY Lord Orford having sent me a copy of a paper which it

[1] Now first published. Isaac Reed thought the Poem here criticised was called 'Public Virtue,' printed in 4to. 1753.—CUNNINGHAM.

[2] Now first published. I very much regret that the remaining letters that passed between Horace Walpole and his uncle, &c., relating to the Mutual Entail of the Walpole or Houghton and Wolterton Estates and the marriage of Miss Nicholl have been lost, and I fear irrecoverably lost. These letters, nine in number, were from and to the following persons:—

1. WALPOLE TO HIS UNCLE HORACE 22 June, 1751.
2. „ TO MR. CAPPER 24 June, 1751.

seems you call *a Mutual Entail*, but which in reality is an act to set aside your brother's grandchildren and daughter, and finding my name inserted in it (a strong presumption of how little you think there is of substantial on your part of the transaction), I must desire my name may be omitted; and this, without supposing, or pretending to suppose, that I sacrifice the least prospect of interest; but I cannot suffer my name to stand with my consent as accessory to a deed so prejudicial to my nephews and to my sister [Lady Mary Churchill], and so entirely annulling the will of my Father, that great man to whom you and I, Sir, owe all we have, and without whom I fear we had all remained in obscurity!

If this is denied me, I shall immediately execute the strongest act the law can invent or allow (and I don't know what the law cannot invent, and I do know that, what it can invent, it will allow), to debar myself from ever receiving any benefit from your fortune, if the most improbable of all events should happen, its coming to our line; and as a record of my disapprobation of this compact.

However, Sir, as no interest of my own is concerned, as I plead for those who are nearest and most dear to me, and as I think it so serious a thing lightly and without any reason to set aside the will of the Dead—and of what Dead! I will, notwithstanding all our differences, still act the part of a relation, and even of a friend towards you, and as such, I most solemnly intreat and recommend to you to be content with all the obligations you received from my Father, and not exclude his grandchildren and his daughter from his estate. At least, I will not be a party to setting aside the disposition which he made of a fortune (acquired by himself) in favour of his own Posterity.

I am, Sir, Your humble servant,
HOR. WALPOLE.

3.	WALPOLE TO MISS NICHOLL	28 June, 1751.
4.	„ TO MRS. HARRIS	7 Aug. 1751.
5.	OLD HORACE WALPOLE TO HIS NEPHEW HORACE .	10 April, 1756.
6.	WALPOLE TO HIS UNCLE HORACE	10 April, 1756.
7.	LORD MALPAS TO OLD HORACE	10 April, 1756.
8.	OLD HORACE WALPOLE TO LORD MALPAS . .	11 April, 1756
9.	„ „ TO HIS NEPHEW HORACE .	13 April, 1756.

In this correspondence young Horace was seen in a very shrewd and unselfish light—old Horace in a very shrewd and very selfish light. The latter was a loser in both negotiations—the Mutual Entail and Miss Nicholl's marriage with his eldest son.—CUNNINGHAM.

2657. TO HORACE WALPOLE (THE WRITER'S UNCLE.).[1]

Arlington Street, April 14, 1756.

I SHOULD not think a letter with so little solidity in it as yours required any reply, if I could not answer it by a plain matter of fact, which you seem totally to have forgot, but of which many living witnesses can put you in mind. The reason you constantly gave my Father for not accepting the Mutual Entail, was, sometimes, that you yourself would not pass over your own daughters, sometimes that your wife would not let her estate go from her own daughters. As to that plausible reason, as you think, that this Lord Orford might have cut off the entail, it is easy to observe how you confound terms; you say, your sons could not have cut off your entail; but would not your grandson, as well as your brother's grandson, have such a power? You are forced to destroy the parallel, before you can produce a semblance.

As to Lord Orford's approving what you say to me, it surprises me a little; for in the last conversation I had with him, he owned he was sensible that the compact he had inconsiderately made with you, was very prejudicial to himself for this reason that, considering the great difference of your ages, if you should die in a year, he would in honour remain tied up not to alter his will, and consequently had given away from himself the propriety of his estate; he thanked me for what I said to him, and his last words to me were,—"Sir, I will see you again in two days, and by that time I will have dissolved the bargain."

With regard to your taking upon you to decide what was my Father's great object, I am not casuist enough to interpret between the act and the will of the Dead. Were I to advise in this case, you had better rest the whole upon the power the law gives you; that, perhaps, will not be disputed. Of the equity and gratitude the world will judge, as they will of your professions, which must be tried by your actions.

I am, &c.

H. W.

[1] Now first published.—CUNNINGHAM.

2658. TO GEORGE MONTAGU.[1]

Dec. 28, 1756.

You, who have always cultivated rather than stifled tender sensations, will know how to feel for me, who have at last lost my dear friend, Mann! not unexpectedly certainly; but I never could find that one grew indifferent to what pains, as one does to what pleases one. With all my consciousness of my having been more obliged to your brother than I could possibly deserve, I think I should have trespassed on his kindness, and have asked him to continue his kindness to Mr. Mann's son and brother, if I had not known that he was good beyond doubt: it is just necessary for me as transferring my friendship to the family to tell you, that if the contrary should be insinuated, they do continue the business.

Had I anything to tell you, it would be unpardonable in me to communicate my grief to you, and neglect your entertainment, but Mr. Pitt's gout has *laid up* the nation. We adjourn to-morrow for the holidays, and have not had a single division. Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, France, and the King of Prussia will not leave us idle much longer. Adieu! I am most unaffectedly grieved, and most unfeignedly yours,

H. W.

2659. TO THE COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK.[2]

Paris, Sept. 20, 1765.

I obey your commands, Madam, though it is to talk of myself. The journey has been of great service to me, and my strength returned sensibly in two days. Nay, though all my hours are turned topsy-turvy, I find no inconvenience, but dine at half an hour after two, and sup at ten, as easily as I did in England at my usual hours. Indeed breakfast and dinner, now and then jostle one another, but I have found an excellent preservative against sitting up late, which is by not playing at whist. They constantly tap a rubber before supper, get up in the middle of a game, finish it after a meal of three courses and a dessert; add another rubber to it; then take their knotting-bags, draw together into a little circle, and start some topic of literature or irreligion, and chat till it is time to go to bed; that is, till you would think it time to get up again. The

[1] Now first published. The Manns were Army Clothiers.—Cunningham.
[2] Now first collected.—Cunningham.

women are very good humoured and easy; most of the men disagreeable enough. However as everything English is in fashion, our bad French is accepted into the bargain. Many of us are received everywhere. Mr. Hume is fashion itself, although his French is almost as unintelligible as his English; Mr Stanley is extremely liked, and, if liking them, good humour and spirits can make anybody please, Mr. Elliot will not fail: for my own part I receive the greatest civilities, and in general am much amused. But I could wish there was less whist, and somewhat more cleanliness. My Lady Brown and I have diverted ourselves with the idea of Lady Blandford here. I am convinced she would walk upon stilts for fear of coming near the floors, and that would rather be a droll sight.

The town is extremely empty at present, our manners having gained so much in that respect too, as to send them all into the country till winter. Their country houses would appear to me no more rural than those in Paris. Their gardens are like *deserts*, with no more verdure or shade. What trees they have are stripped up, and cut straight at top; it is quite the massacre of the innocents. Their houses in town are all white and gold and looking-glass: I never know one from another. Madame de Mirepoix's, though small, has the most variety and a little leaven of English.

You see, Madam, it will take some time to make me a perfect Frenchman. Upon the whole I am very well amused, which is all I seek besides my health. I am a little too old to be inquiring into their government or politics, being come hither, not to finish my studies, but to forget them. One may always take one's choice here, old folks may be as young as they please, and the young as wise as they will. The former not only suits my age better, but my inclination, though the *bon ton* here is to be grave and learned. When Miss Hotham, to whom I beg my best compliments, is so good as to acknowledge the receipt of this, I must desire her to direct to her and your Ladyship's most obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Thus:—

"À Mons.
"Mons. WALPOLE,
"Recommandée à Mons. Foley,
"Banquier,
"à Paris."

P.S.—The most I ask of a letter is a particular account of your Ladyship's health.

2660. TO THE COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK.[1]

Paris, Dec. 5, 1765.

. . . . who keeps Tuesdays. Lord Berkeley is arrived, and much improved both in his person and manner. The Duke of Buccleuch is expected next week.

The House of Richmond is gone to Auvigné for a week, as the Duchess will not have her audience till the Dauphin's fate is decided. I did not dare to accompany them at this time of year after all I have suffered.

Yesterday I dined at La Borde's, the great banker of the Court. Lord! Madam, how little and poor all your houses in London will look after his! In the first place, you must have a garden half as long as the Mall, and then you must have fourteen windows, each as long as the other half, looking into it, and each window must consist of only eight panes of looking-glass. You must have a first and second ante-chamber, and they must have nothing in them but dirty servants. Next must be the grand cabinet, hung with red damask, in gold frames, and covered with eight large and very bad pictures, that cost four thousand pounds—I cannot afford them you a farthing cheaper. Under these, to give an air of lightness, must be hung bas-reliefs in marble. Then there must be immense *armoires* of tortoise-shells and or-molu, inlaid with medals.[2] And then you may go into the petit-cabinet, and then into the great *salle*, and the gallery, and the billiard-room, and the eating-room; and all these must be hung with crystal lustres and looking-glass from top to bottom, and then you must stuff them fuller than they will hold with granite tables and porphyry urns, and bronzes, and statues, and vases, and the L—d or the devil knows what. But, for fear you should ruin yourself or the nation, the Duchesse de Grammont must give you *this*, and Madame de Marsan *that;* and if you have anybody that has any taste to advise you, your eating-room must be hung with huge hunting-pieces in frames of all coloured golds, and at top of one of them you may have a setting-dog, who, having sprung a wooden partridge, it may be flying a yard off against the wainscot. To warm and light this palace it

[1] Now first collected. Add to end of Letter 1030, vol. iv. p. 452.—Cunningham.

[2] This manufacture is called Boule (erroneously Buhl) from the name of an artist who worked for Louis XVI.—Croker.

must cost you eight and twenty thousand livres[1] a-year in wood and candles. If you cannot afford that, you must stay till my Lord Clive returns with the rest of the Indies.

The mistress of this Arabian Nights' Entertainment is very pretty, and Sir Laurence la Borde[2] is so fond of her, that he sits by her at dinner, and calls her *Pug*, or *Taw*, or I forget what.

Lady Mary Chabot always charges me to mention her to your Ladyship, with particular attention. There are some to whom I could wish your Ladyship would do me the same good office; but I have been too troublesome already, and will only mention Miss Hotham, Mr Chetwynd, Lady Blandford, and St. James's Square.

2661. TO THE COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK.[3]

Thursday, July 10, 1766.

YESTERDAY the Administration's year was completed, and yesterday the Administration ended. His Majesty declared to them that he had sent for Mr. Pitt. Nothing more is known, nor will be till his arrival. The event itself is but little known yet in town. The succeeding days will be a little more busy, and your Ladyship may guess what curiosity and expectation will be raised till the list appears. I knew yesterday that something was ready to burst out, as I believe your Ladyship perceived, though I could not tell what. If Mr. Pitt does not arrive by Saturday, I shall be at Twickenham that day, and will see you in the evening if he does. I cannot be so unfashionable as to quit the town, when everybody will be coming to it, though I have nothing else to do than to amuse myself, except being very glad, for reasons I will tell you. Yours, &c.

2662. TO ISAAC REED.[4]

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 11, 1774.

THOUGH you have not been so good as to let me know to whom

[1] About 1200*l.*—CROKER.

[2] His name was Jean Joseph de la Borde; but Walpole calls him Sir Laurence, in allusion to some English banker. The Count de la Borde, whose travels in Spain are so well known, was the son of the banker.—CROKER.

[3] Now first collected.—CUNNINGHAM.

[4] Now first published. It is addressed to Mr. I. R., to be left at the Chapter Coffee house, London.—CUNNINGHAM.

I am so much obliged, yet I am very glad you have given me an opportunity at least of thanking you. Had I sooner known how, I should have saved you some trouble, as several of the notices you have sent me had already come to my knowledge, and are actually inserted in a new edition of my 'Catalogue,' which has been long printed, though from some other reasons not yet published. Indeed, Sir, I am ashamed that you should have thrown away so much time upon a work that deserved it so little, and which I am sorry I cannot now make more perfect by your assistance, it being printed with other trifles of my own, and, consequently, I should be obliged to throw away the whole edition if I altered it; and that is too late to do at my time of life, subject as I am to long confinements from the gout; a reflection that has made me give over all thoughts of troubling the public any more, which has been too indulgent to me already.

If you were inclined to be still more kind to me, it would be by letting me have the pleasure of knowing to whom I am so much indebted. I shall not be in town to stay, probably, till after Christmas, and then should be very glad to wait on you or to see you in Arlington Street, to assure you how much I am, Sir,

Your obliged and obedient humble Servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

2663. TO EDMOND MALONE.[1]

Berkeley Square, Feb. 4, 1782.

You have made me a very valuable present, Sir, for which I was earnestly wishing, as your criticisms are far too good to be committed only to the few hours of life of a newspaper. You have produced many new and very forcible arguments against the champions of Rowley, and pointed their own artillery against them victoriously. Indeed, I wonder so acute a writer as Mr. Bryant could relax into so many assumptions; but when he set out with begging the question that Rowley wrote in all sorts of provincial dialects (which a monk confined to his convent was of all men the least likely to be conversant in), I do not believe he expected that you would discover that Rowley not only employed every *patois*, but the language of two entire centuries. This is foiling him at

[1] Now first published.—CUNNINGHAM.

his own weapons. So you have in the specimens you have produced of commencements of such a series of old poems both prior and subsequent to the supposed era, and which no more resemble the modulation of the imaginary Rowley, than the first leathern waggons that were called coaches, are like to a modern varnished chariot. In fact, if there is any such discriminating faculty in us, by which we distinguish between the hobble of a rhymer of the fifteenth century and a poet of the eighteenth, we cannot be in doubt a moment.

Mr. Bryant and Dr. Milles have in vain resorted to the fastnesses of uncouth old story, as the Welsh did into the precipices of Wales, and thought nobody would follow them but such persevering climbers into the clouds as themselves; yet, Sir, you have baffled them there too; and I own I am flattered that the same argument struck me in a letter I wrote to Mr. Cole, of Milton,[1] on the first publication of Mr. Bryant's book, namely, that the MS. the most likely to be found in one of Canning's six chests, was a Diary—nay, I find since that, that there was such a Diary by Turgot.

Of all the forgeries, the most preposterous to be sure is that of 'Canning's Cabinet of Curiosities;' the poor lad, before he came to London, might be ignorant enough to write it; but ignorance is not a term coarse enough for any one past fifteen, who can swallow so gross and clumsy an imposture. A picture by Vandyck in that collection, as you say, Sir, could not augment the absurdity, it is already so complete; nor is any man who credits it fit to be reasoned with. It would be flattering him with seeming to take him for a rational being.

I observed the other day in the first volume of the 'Biographia Dramatica' that Mr. Thomas Broughton, who wrote in the 'Biog. Britann.' was possessed of the cure of St. Mary Redcliffe in 1744, and was buried in that church in 1774. Is it credible that so literary a man should have never heard of the famous MSS.? He wrote a play, too, and consequently was something of a poet—and yet did he never take the least notice of such treasures! Is it possible that he never should have heard of them, though they passed into so many hands? Mr. Broughton lived between the period when Vertue copied the Painter's bill, and that in which Chatterton first saw this mine of poetry.

[1] Dated Dec. 30, 1781 (No. 2103), see Vol. VIII. p. 138.—Cunningham.

I beg your pardon, Sir, for troubling you with so long a letter. I intended only to thank you—but the pleasure your book gave me—in which I fear your kindness to me had a little share too—drew me into a conversation beyond what was fair.

I have the honour to be,
With great gratitude and respect,
Sir,
Your most obedient humble Servant,
HOR. WALPOLE.

2664. TO THE BISHOP OF DROMORE.[1]

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 18, 1792.

IT was not, I assure your Lordship, from any idleness or want of attention to the intended publications, with specimens of which you was pleased to entrust me, that I did not contribute any hints or information; but I have formerly scribbled so much on the subjects in question, and of late have been so much involved, since my nephew's death, in much more disagreeable business, that I had not only exhausted what I knew, but have had no time to collect new materials, except one single article, which I will mention before I conclude this letter.

With regard to Sir Thomas Wyat's 'Despatches,' I cannot satisfy your Lordship whether there are more than four in the Museum. It was from Mr. Gray's transcript that I published Sir Thomas's Defence: at this distance of time I cannot recollect whether he copied the letters too.

Give me leave to set your Lordship right about my 'Miscellaneous Antiquities.' I never published but two numbers; in the second (which you tell me you have, my Lord) is all I know or could recover relative to Sir Thomas, and consequently I never engaged to say more of him. The first number shall be at your Lordship's service when you come to town. I am much obliged and gladly accept, my Lord, your kind offer of sending me, at your return to

[1] Now first collected:—from the Percy Correspondence in vol. viii. of Nichols's 'Illustrations of Literature.' Walpole's correspondent was Dr. Percy, editor of the 'Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, whose intended publications were an edition of Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey's poems, and of the works of George Villiers, second Duke of Buckingham.—CUNNINGHAM.

Dromore, a copy of the title-page of the Countess of Northumberland's[1] 'Volume of Prayers,' of which I never heard before. My friend Lady Suffolk, her niece by marriage, has talked to me of her, having on that alliance visited her. She then lived in the house, now White's, at the upper end of St. James's Street, and was the last who kept up the ceremonious state of the old peerage: when she went out to visit, a footman bareheaded walked on each side of her coach, and a second coach with her women attended her. I think, too, that Lady Suffolk told me that her daughter-in-law, the Duchess of Somerset, never sat down before her without her leave to do so. I suppose old Duke Charles [the proud Duke] had imbibed a good quantity of his stately pride in such a school.

Thank you much, my Lord, for taking the trouble to detail the account of Fuller's pictures of the escape of Charles II. I have some imperfect recollection of having heard that they are in Lord Clanbrassil's possession, and am glad they are so well preserved. Surely, my Lord, so entertaining and informing a letter was too generous to be in want of an apology. To make some sort of return, I can acquaint your Lordship that in Dr. Harrington's very precious publication called 'Nugæ Antiquæ,' there is a sweet poem written by the Viscount Rochford (whom by mistake the Doctor calls Earl, and does not seem to know who he was), brother of Anne Boleyn. The composition is so easy, and so approaching to the refinement of modern poetry, that I found no difficulty of turning it, with few alterations, into the style of the present age, as may be seen by comparing them.[2] This was done on its first appearance, and I had laid it aside, reserving it for a second edition of my 'Noble Authors,' if I should ever produce one, which now at my very advanced age is not very likely; and therefore if your Lordship should think proper to add the original, as it deserves, to Lord Surrey's poems, I should have no objection to your giving my version too; not that it would do me any honour, but as it would prove how a poet of taste, and with a good ear, could anticipate the elegance of a more polished age, though he could not work miracles, as some, who are no conjurors themselves, believe Rowley did, even though nobody knows that Rowley ever existed. I enclose the verses, and have the honour

[1] Lady Elizabeth Howard, daughter of Theophilus Earl of Suffolk, second wife and widow of Algernon Percy, Earl of Northumberland, Lord High Admiral (d. 1668).—Cunningham.

[2] Walpole's version of Lord Rochford's Poem is printed in Nichols's 'Illustrations of Literature,' vol. viii., p. 292.—Cunningham.

of being your Lordship's most respectful and most obedient humble servant,

ORFORD.

P. S. I have made a mistake; for I this moment recollect that the ancient Countess of Northumberland was second wife and widow of the Lord Admiral Algernon, and consequently not mother-in-law but grandmother-in-law of the Duke of Somerset.

I am not sure that Lord Rochford's verses were in the first edition of the 'Nugæ,' which I have not here; I rather think not. I know the pages of the two editions are not the same.

2665. TO GROSVENOR BEDFORD, ESQ.[1]

[*N. D.*]

As soon as ever you receive the enclosed Advertisement, pray carry it yourself to G. Woodfall, printer, next Craig's Court, Charing Cross, and have it put into the 'Public Advertiser' of tomorrow. Be so good not to mention it to any mortal, and take care he does not know you nor suspect that you are a friend of mine. If he makes any scruple of inserting the last words, offer him more money, and if he will not, propose to change *scandalous* into *abusive*, and then I think he will have no exception. I will explain all this to you when I see you.

Yours, &c.,
H. W.

[1] Now first published. I have failed in finding the advertisement referred to. Compare Letter 534, vol. iii., p. 118.—CUNNINGHAM.

APPENDIX.

PAGE

WALPOLE'S LETTERS TO MONTAGU 499

EXTRACTS FROM THE UNPUBLISHED CORRESPONDENCE OF THE EARL AND COUNTESS OF HERTFORD WITH HORACE WALPOLE 505

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WALPOLE'S LETTERS TO MONTAGU.

[I had advanced as far as Vol. IV., p. 159, of this work, when I ascertained, for the first time, that the original autographs of Walpole's Letters to George Montagu were in the Library of His Grace the Duke of Manchester, at Kimbolton Castle. His Grace most liberally placed the series at my disposal (for which I here renew my thanks); and the immediate result was the painful discovery that the whole of the letters had been originally copied and printed with the grossest negligence. From Vol. IV., p. 159, the letters to Montagu stand in the text of this edition just as they were written. All the errors, and many of the omissions (a few are unfit for publication), will be found in the following pages.—Cunningham.

Vol. I., p. 3. dear Harry] dear *Horry* [Walpole himself].
„ 15. Letter 10]. The original letter concludes with a very long quotation from Green's newly published poem, 'The Spleen.' The letter is addressed to Montagu, in Paris.
„ 376. Lady * * *] Lady Caroline Fitzroy.
Vol. II., p. 23. grass grows now where Troy stood] grass now grows where Troy town stood.
„ 25. the sister-Countesses of Burlington and Talbot] Burlington and Thanet.
„ 25. she sups at Lady Carlisle's] she dines at Bedford House, and sups at Lady Cardigan's.
„ 25. but I know not at Leicester House] but I know, not at Carlton House.
„ 26. would write to you] would write to the Poultry.
„ 29. a thousand histories] a thousand idle histories.
„ 29. idea of the Pay-office]. *add*, "She said well to the Duchess of Bedford t'other day, who said the Duke was wind bound at Yarmouth: 'Lord,' says she, 'she will hate Norfolk as much as I do.'"
„ 29. I went to bespeak him] I want to.
„ 31. in the room of Lord Jersey] *add*, "who has a pension of 1200*l.* a-year in Ireland for thirty-one years."
„ 31. the Duke for his severities] his great severities.
„ 32. cut out of the entail] *add*, "An additional circumstance of iniquity is, that he had given a bond for Mr. Spencer for four thousand pound, which now he must pay, and the will and the bond are dated within three days of one another."
„ 33. kept their own titles] *add*, "Dirty little Brook has taken no second title, to save three hundred pound; so if ever he gets a little Brookling, it must be called Lord Greville, and can never be called up to the House of Lords."

Vol. II., p. 33. to take possession] *add*, "I own that circumstance makes it a little suspicious, for by what I saw of the palace there, and what one has heard of him, there is not room for even the material part of him."

" 44. Harwicke] Hardwicke.

" 44. } Harley House] Hurley House.
" 45. }

" 45. have been composed] *add*, "Lord Stair, Lord Granville, and Lord Chesterfield."

" 45. for the little Newcastle] the little mad Newcastle.

" 46. 'Oui,' replied the other, 'cela est vrai'] 'Oui,' replied t'other, 'cela est auguste, cela est vrai,' &c.

" 46. about Balmerino's relapse] old Balmerino's relapse.

" 47. to Vauxhall, and politeness] to Vauxhall by a politeness of.

" 47. there will cease to be a reason] they will cease.

" 63. it may be refused] *add*, "as they are apt to think at the office, that the Duke of Grafton can't be mentioned but in ridicule."

" 63. how do all the comets] cornets.

" 64. sickle] tittle.

" 111. to be old and out of danger] to be old and ugly and out of danger.

" 112. Mrs. Tiddle] *add* Guts and Gundy.

" 112. and that would be] that *it* would be.

" 112. and this is more] *dele* is.

" 118. one vast curious tower] ruinous tower.

" 119. Marquis of Tweedale] *add*, "who indeed did not enliven us."

" 120. Hodges] Hedges.

" 127. three more guns gone off] *add*, "successively."

" 128. commodious method] compendious.

" 133. to have got a new ——] something else new first.

" 133. moved her wedding-ring up and down her finger which] finger with a motion that does not just express matrimony; but it seems was.

" 133. Sir Robert Atkins] Sir Richard Atkins.

" 133. what does it signify] what does that signify.

" 161. the Duke had the music] hoisted the music.

" 161. there was an admirable scene] There was another admirable scene.

" 161. in her forlorn trim] in her old forlorn trim.

" 161. You must not expect to find it in beauty] *add*, "the turf is as brown as Lady Bell Finch, and there is no more shade than on Peggy Banks's forehead."

" 163. longer leave] *add*, "in order to take the benefit of the Act of Insolvency, and avoid paying his creditors."

" 164. a print out of a booth] out of a book.

" 170. Messrs. Montagus] Mrs. Montagu's.

" 170. there till Monday] here till Monday.

" 170. mark of my family] our family.

" 171. Granville's periwig] *add*, "I dare say about as errant trifles as to me."

" 171. The Prince cried] the Monarch bounc'd and cried.

" 171. When the boy had a little recovered his fright he began] when the poor boy had a little recovered a fright, which to be sure flattered Majesty, as nobody has felt a grain of it so long, he began, &c.

" 171. oration still born] *add*, "How could one exert such a silly surly triumph over a poor pretty child."

" 171. think what terror must there] then.

" 171. *add* to end of letter] "It [the epigram] is given to Dodington and Nugent; the latter's wife, who chose a little more substantially than my Lady Anson, and who does not yield to her for absurdities, though in a different style, said to her t'other day, on somebody's

wondering Mr. Lyttelton could marry again after losing so agreeable a wife, 'Well, now, I can figure myself in his situation: when one loses a husband one loves, I don't know, there is such a void, such a space that wants to be filled up.' Adieu!

Vol II., p. 174. you are a party concerned] *add,* "The Duchess was on the point of losing ten thousand pound by a fit of Marlborough's humour. It was in old Fairfax's hands. When he died, she sent for it to his nephew; who owned the trust, but said he was advised that he could not give it up without a release from the Duke; she said, No, it was her own money, and she would have it in her own way; the Duke would do it for a word speaking, but she would have it in her own way. She sent to the South Sea Company, as it is in their bonds, to order Mr. F. to deliver it. They had nothing to do with it. In the meantime the Duke died. Had the Manchester been a legatee, she had lost it; but it will not be worth the Cardigan's while to dispute it, for she has at least ninety more, and never would lend the Duke a shilling in all his purchases."

„ 178. drop our post-chaise that resembled] drop our post-chaise in which we were thrice overturned, and hire a machine that resembled.

„ 179. stories of Harry the Eighth] Histories of.

„ 182. Sir Philip Harvey] Sir Philip Hobby.

„ 207. temptation] *add,* N.P.

Lady Caroline P. takes care that if she should die at an Apothecary's, nobody may doubt who is the father.

„ 211. new brandy] run brandy.

„ 211. to her house] *add* half an hour after seven.

„ 211. cock and hen] *add,* treading.

„ 211. care of Lady Caroline] conduct of.

„ 212. Lady Petersham] Lady C.

„ 212. dined with Lady Fanny] Lady Fitzroy.

„ 213. with his petite partie to help us to mince chickens] with his Norsa and his petite partie, and help us mince chickens.

„ 225. missed one here] missed me here.

„ 255. you went out of town] *add,* "You knew the Pelhams were to be Kings by Act of Parliament, as they are already by majorities in Parliament."

„ 257. Hartington] Harrington.

„ 263. snug] smug.

„ 263. the memoirs' writer] *add,* "our Tigress's ancestor."

„ 263. principal personages] *add,* "Lady Caroline Petersham is not more vermilion."

„ 264. masked] mashed.

„ 267. drawing] dancing.

„ 268. I found here] I found in this Purgatory of Antiquities.

„ 276. Lady Caroline Petersham] Lady Catherine Pelham.

„ 307. goes to dream] grows to dram.

„ 333. to have his son in] to have her son left in.

„ 342. Lord Falkland] Lord Lempster.

„ 418. * * * * * *] *fill up with* "Drumlanrig's," and "Bland's."

„ 430. to the Hertfords] to the Harrises.

„ 452. manufacturer] manufacture.

„ 481. scarce a crown a-piece] scare and a crown a-piece.

„ 483. Her Royal Highness and His Royal Highness] *add,* "whose nicknames are Pitt and Fox."

Vol. III., p. 9. Mr. James Lowther] Sir James.

„ 13. he sent Schutz for] he sent, that that is a King sent for.

„ 13. de varieties] de rarities.

Vol. III., p. 26. till now, so preferable] till now, though so preferable.
„ 35. underpriced] underprized.
„ 46. and has got the borough] stolen the borough.
„ 77. my Lady Townshend gave] Lady Irwin.
„ 80. to the Duchess and Rigby] to the Duchess, or to those who govern him through her.
„ 100. and the Knight of the Garter] and the *new* Knight of the Garter (meaning Lord Hertford).
„ 100. Stop, Townshend, and let me but *paint* what you say] print.
„ 120. but in very palace] in her very palace.
„ 122. *bis* Sir James Grey] Sir James Gray.
„ 134. this great performer] reformer.
„ 147. Volapolhausen] Valpolhausen.
„ 220. Lady John Scott] Lady Jane Scott.
„ 226. Maria was in a white silver gown] a white and silver night-gown.
„ 258. Can *we* easily leave] can *one* easily leave.
„ 262. My Lord Lyttelton comes to my lady] The MS. does not give Lord Lyttelton's name. I suspect, therefore, that Walpole alludes to Lady Mary Wortley and Lord Lincoln, and not to Lord Lyttelton and Mrs. Montagu.
„ 266. and calls them three-and-thirty] calls *him*.
„ 272. poor Lady Coventry is going to be one] *add*, " Molly Howe has not done pining for Sir Armitage."
„ 272. that Countess] that great vulgar Countess.
„ 273. mediate an union] meditate an union.
„ 279. my lord said he has quite] my Lord Temple said he, &c.
„ 282. but Lord Talbot was no] but that madman Lord Talbot.
„ 283. two of them who swooned away at the confusion of being stared at] *add*, " One of these is a piece of Sir Clement Cotterel."
„ 299. to which he was forced] to which *he said* he was forced.
„ 300. and should not have asked her if she had been ill] *dele* her.
„ 328. whatever Sir John could get from them] purloin from them. The date of this letter (No. 674) should be July 10.
„ 336. the Trent wriggles through at the foot] through a lovely meadow at the foot.
„ 337. Mr. Boufoy] Mr. Bonfoy.
„ 337. Chatsworth, which ever since I was born I have condemned] I have heard condemned.
„ 337. conceive in the vale] in the next vale.
„ 337. the great apartment is first] is trist.
„ 338. ought to have established there] established *themselves* there.
„ 338. at the upper end is the state] a state.
„ 339. when Bolsover's fair fame shall tend] fair frame.
„ 339. five thousand pounds of which] pounds' worth of which.
„ 344. My Lord Dysart is such a ——] brute.
„ 344. the Ladies Townshend and Cowper] the Ladies Tweedale and Cowper.

Note. The Mark Antony of this letter is Richard Bentley.

„ 344. I have laughed, been scolded] been cool, scolded.
„ 347. to the clock he gave Anne Boleyn] to the measure he gave.
„ 348. to get an order for my Lady Henry] Hervey.
„ 350. I knew not a syllable] *add*, " more."
„ 352. are similar omens] are *sinister* omens.
„ 353. as I suppose his court will] *this* court will.
„ 355. breaks out on all occasions] *add*, " he has shown neither inveteracy nor malice—in short, we must have gained. He cannot be so unfeeling, so avaricious, or so German as his father."

Vol. III., p. 356. Lord Gower, I believe, will be so] *add,* "by that liberty of unreasonableness which the Duke of Bedford assumes as heir of my Lord Russell."

„ 359. last night Mr. Dauncey] Mr. Dawnay.

„ 360. to return to their coach] to return in their.

„ 360. but he is saved] *add,* "and Sir Thomas remains as lumber not yet disposed of."

„ 360. common saying of addresses] common toying.

„ 360. this sovereign don't stand] this young man don't.

„ 361. Chapter in rich *robes*] *copes.*

„ 361. taller and older] *add,* "enough."

„ 362. attending the funeral of a father] *add,* "how little reason soever he had to love him."

„ 363. the last at the request] at the earnest request.

„ 364. could go to the boxes] could get to.

„ 365. but I have been these two days] been here these two days.

„ 369. a warm memorial in a warm manner] in a warmer manner.

„ 369. struck off Mrs. Naylor] struck out the name of.

„ 373. I played with Madam * * * *] Emily.

„ 374. Mr. Price] one Price.

„ 377. ball at Carlton House] at Norfolk House.

„ 386. for Petersham (*bis*)] *read* Harrington.

„ 387. Letter 713] The date of this letter should be March 13.

„ 388. exact clew] clue.

„ 390. you will find all these] think.

„ 390. reflections or common-places] reflections *on.*

„ 390. with country dancing] dances.

„ 396. the great Pam] Pan.

„ 397. Wake Duncan with this knocking] *thy* knocking.

„ 403. Mrs. Prijean] Mrs. Prujean.

„ 404. placed his nose most critically] placed his nose as critically as Herbert's epigram.

„ 408. the two Chief Justices and Lord B.] Lord Bute.

„ 409. my Lady D.] Denbigh.

„ 414. Robert Brudenel] *Mrs.* Robert Brudenel.

„ 414. his Majesty was going to be married] to lose his maidenhead. (*add*) "You may chuse what complexion you please for the new Queen. Every colour under the sun is given to her."

„ 417. all my —— relations] all my mad relations.

„ 419. a magnifying class] glass.

„ 424. perched up] perked up.

„ 424. to the actor] actors.

„ 429. Hertfordshire] Herefordshire.

„ 436. a regal wedding] a royal wedding.

„ 437. the middle age] the middle-aged.

„ 438. the handsomest man she ever saw] handsomest young man.

„ 438. Lord B****] Bolingbroke.

„ 438. were woeful] *add,* "Yet the last the least ridiculous of the three."

„ 450. Caius Atticus] Caius Allenius Atticus.

„ 462. memorandum] memorandums.

„ 470. marry two Hannahs] both Hannahs.

„ 471. Enhance the white they mean to stain] meant.

„ 480. She needs no cap] She wears no cap.

„ 482. their noises when they can] where.

„ 491. resist his copy] this copy.

„ 492. completely mad] *add,* "The poor soul after the first transport seemed to bear it tolerably, but has been writing to him ever since."

Vol.III.,p.493. idea of Mr. Bentley's] *add*, "Odes."
„ 498. my brother's second chambermaid] my mother's.
„ 502. absurdly glad] assuredly glad.
„ 503. when will keep your Strawberry tide] you will keep.
Vol. IV., p. 12. Danvers's old mistress] Draper's.
„ 35. your King's Cousin]your King-Cousin [meaning Halifax, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.]
„ 49. as oft as I descend] ascend.
„ 60. the business of women] woman.
„ 61. his tranquillity] this.
„ 63. go to dine] go and dine.
„ 64. in short, there is nothing] it is nothing.
„ 64. he is packing up] patching up.
„ 64. quarrel for the plunder] squabble.
„ 69. repair to their standard] that.
„ 69. their magnificence] their jovial magnificence.
„ 69. unrewarded merit] rewarded merit.
„ 83. you and your grandsons] you and your Grandisons.
„ 84. a theatrical storm] a threatened.
„ 95. we do not drive one nail] our nail.
„ 96. neat, small] neat, little.
„ 96. I know nothing about the world] *add* "care nothing about the world."
„ 99. frames of glass] panes
„ 106. the fence and the hill] the fence and the shell.
„ 106. my *sorcières*] *mes sorcières*.
„ 114. Mr. Crosby] Mr. Cosby.
„ 115. the very wreck] the very week.
„ 122. at the fore glass was here] *dele* "was here."
„ 134. Squire Bencowe] Squire Blencowe.

[From Letter 893, vol. iv. p. 159, the letters to Montagu, as here printed, agree with the originals.]

EXTRACTS

FROM THE

UNPUBLISHED CORRESPONDENCE

OF

THE EARL AND COUNTESS OF HERTFORD

WITH

HORACE WALPOLE.

We did not intend the King should marry so soon, and I am half angry with Lady Sarah Lenox for it.

July 17, 1761.

Come away, as I hear with pleasure from G. Selwyn you are able, and play at loo with your favourite Duchess. She has a party to-morrow night, and goes to Lord Ravensworth's on Monday.

London, Sept. 10, 1762.

Mr. Hume, who sees me write, says he is determined to make you the best answer he can to your enquiry about the cause of the Jesuit's disgrace.

Montreuil, Oct. 15, 1763.

I saw Lord Holland at Fontainebleau, he was very polite and attentive to me; I showed him the respect due to him from the English Ambassador, as far as that situation would allow it, which indeed is very limited: I had the honour of speaking to him twice or thrice at Court, and I had no family settled there. I fancy we understood one another very well, and what we owed publicly to each other; if you hear me abused at any time in London I desire to know it. Hitherto I have done the business of my Court with particular attention, and have hardly had any opportunity to act in point of form; during my absence from Paris, Lady Hertford has had almost all her travelling countrymen to dinner, or supper, and I have been introducing them to balls and operas, and doing their little jobs at Court. Lady Holland, and the Duke and Duchess of Richmond, have been very polite and attentive to Lady Hertford; young Fox is a very good creature without guile or design. His Grace asked Lady Hertford a most improper question from him I think, whether Mr. Hume was my friend or my Secretary; Lady Hertford knew how to answer, by painting the *friend* in strong colours. Lady Holland has affected, I hear, to talk of Bunbury's not coming here, as if it arose from the occasion Ministers might have for his service in Parliament. Adieu, dear Horry, my Courier is going, and I must conclude my History by assuring you that I am always,

Most sincerely and affectionately yours,

Paris, Nov. 11, 1763. HERTFORD.

Lady Holdernesse has been presented at Versailles, and was well received; I do not know how you will approve it in England; there are certain forms observed here at Court, to which not only the English ladies of quality, but the Germans will not submit. Elle a franchie le pas: but you will not know it from me when you talk of it.

Paris, Dec. 7, 1763.

Apropos to duels, Mr. Martin is at Paris. He has dined with me, and given me a very modest account of the whole transaction between himself and Wilkes. I could not find out why he should leave England upon it, since Wilkes was not likely to die, and he agreed with me, though he said he was always liable to be put into Newgate by a Justice of Peace's warrant. He said he had taken his friends' opinion, and amongst them Lord Granby's, and they had determined it so, after which he thought it became him to acquiesce under it. He has been at Lisle, and in other places, and is but just come to Paris.

Churchill is said to be here, after having sworn that he was the author of the infamous paper ascribed to Wilkes; but as I have not seen him, nor do not imagine such a trick would save the latter, I do not believe it.

Paris, Dec. 28, 1763.

Mr. Wilkes is here: he came soon after his arrival to my door, I was not at home, or not visible, and he left his name. On Sunday he was at the Chapel in my house, which divine service makes free, but I was then at Versailles: when we came back from thence, Mr. Hume told Mr. Trail he must have been strangely puzzled to preach against any sin without offending him; but, as I do not love mischief, you shall not repeat it. I inquired in the house from those who had served the Duke of Bedford, and Mr. Neville, what they had done in the same circumstances; his Grace had visited him and invited him twice to dinner. Mr. Neville had left his name, or had it left at his door. The last I thought the most becoming example for his Majesty's representative, and in consequence my name has been carried to the Swiss of his Hotel in form; nor do I think myself at liberty (with all the inclination in the world to be personally civil) to show this gentleman in his circumstances any kind of countenance or protection from my representation, so if you hear it named, you will know this to be the case, whatever may be said about it, but perhaps nothing may, and I shall like it the better.

Wilkes went to see Martin here, and talked to him with his usual gay freedom for an hour, as if their acquaintance had never been interrupted by any quarrel. He talks here of being in London, I hear, by the 16th; his wound is still open, but I fancy not at all dangerous, if his way of treating his constitution and running about does not make it so.

Paris, Jan. 6, 1764.

Wilkes is still here, he talked of being in England for his expulsion, since that he has been reported ill from the neglect of his wound, and, I believe, sent an attestation of it to England. He is now again about the town, and talks of returning this week or the next to London. He asked Mr. Selwyn the other day if I had been informed that a bill was found against C. Webb for perjury, and added that he had some hopes I should hear of it in the first instance by a question at Versailles. He has behaved very properly by me since he has been here, in not trying to put me under any difficulties upon his account.

Paris, Jan. 23, 1764.

I have seen but little of Lord Holland. He was invited to dine here and was engaged; he was likewise invited with Lady Holland and his son to a very great family party of Berwicks and Fitzjames's, but he did not stay supper. It seems he never does; and I have dined once at his house, but was obliged to come home about

business immediately after dinner. I think he does not seem to amuse himself much here, he looks grave and sleepy, and seems depressed by his constitution; Lady Holland seems happier here than in England, and does very well with the French; the son is a good natured boy.

Paris, Feb. 25, 1764.

Madame Pompadour's illness has been the chief object of Paris for the last ten days. It has been so serious as to interrupt in some degree both the business and diversions of Versailles. She is at Choisi, where the King has staid to attend her; her disorder has been a fever and oppression upon her breast; it is now said she will recover, but she is still ill. The King himself has sat up, I hear, three nights with her, the Duke of Orleans one, and the Prince of Condé another; the Prince of Conti is the only one who will not bow to this influence, and he is rather in ridicule than esteem for it, such is the way of reasoning in this country, though the Parliament intend if they can to change it.

Paris, March 8, 1764.

My brother has acquainted me with the insult offered to my character in two papers, and the zeal and tenderness he has shown in resenting it. The attack I suspect must have come from Wilkes, who is every Sunday at my Chapel here, and has betrayed the idea to me by laughing frequently during the time of service, for which he seems in this dirty paragraph to have furnished a [?] by expressing his dissatisfaction at Mr. Trail's reading the Liturgy.

My behaviour to Mr. Wilkes has been, notwithstanding this, very inoffensive, and he has declared himself at different times much satisfied with it; but in talking of my suspicion to Mr. Hume, who has now and then conversed with Wilkes here, he has increased it extremely by acquainting me that he once said to him when they were joking together, that it was more prudent to be upon friendly terms, as the contrary might produce newspaper paragraphs, which it would be very easy to send to England, that might be extremely unpleasant to the Embassy here. This then I suspect is the first specimen of some dislike, and as there is no principle to restrain it, I wish it may not be followed by others. Till I am more sure I shall, however, speak little of my suspicion, and in the mean time my warmest wishes will be exerted for the removal of this firebrand from Paris.

We have now a great number of our countrymen here; my Chapel was crowded yesterday to hear Dr. Sterne preach.

Paris, March 25, 1764.

We are not likely now to have a new first Mistress for this kingdom. Madame de Pompadour is recovering, the physicians think her danger over for the fever, the risk she has to run is from her lungs, the disorder was chiefly seated there. If she had died, we should have had many competitors for her place, some thinking it would have fallen upon a young woman, by whom the King has had a son, who is now two years old; others tell you that she would not have had sense enough, to have employed the very many idle hours his Majesty has to trifle away, and that her youth would have been no recommendation, since there are always handsome girls kept at Versailles for the King's amusement in that way when he is so disposed, but that he must have taken a woman of sense, in whose apartment he might have gone sixty times a day, as he now does, to unburthen his mind and receive advice; others think he might have fallen into devotion and the hands of the clergy.

Paris, March 22, 1764.

Madame Pompadour is at last dying; she has made her will, received extreme unction, knows her own danger, enjoys her senses perfectly, and meets death with great firmness and resignation. Who her successor will be I cannot yet tell you; Madame de Grammont, the Duc de Choiseul's sister, will be a candidate, but her

beauty cannot decide for her; the King, it is said, must have a woman, but it is not yet clear what perfections are to determine the choice; I shall divert myself with the competition, it may be an entertaining one.

P.S. Since I wrote my letter Madame Pompadour is dead.

Paris, April 15, 1764.

I know you had curiosity about Madame de Pompadour: I must therefore add to the account I have given you in another letter of her death, by informing you that upon opening her will, and examining her circumstances, she is found, much to the astonishment of the generality of people here, to have died rather poor than rich, considering her situation for so many years past. Her personal estate, consisting chiefly in diamonds, is pretty considerable; the chief part of it she has left to her brother, with an estate of thirty thousand livres a year, an expensive place that always cost her more than it produced. This, with two considerable annuities that cease with her life, were all the fortune she seems to have possessed. She was extremely charitable, and therefore you will be the less surprised that she has left a million of livres debt. Her very fine house at Paris she has left to the King; his Majesty is not yet resolved whether he shall accept it, if he does he proposes to give the value of it to her brother. She has likewise left some few legacies, which are inconsiderable.

The King seemed to-day affected with her death.

Paris, April 16, 1764.

Lord March, Mr. Selwyn, and Mr. Elliot, are arrived here. They proposed going to Paris on Monday, but from the civilities shown and proposed to be shown to them till Tuesday night, they do not go till Wednesday; the two first stay at Paris, the latter talks of going into the country for his health and amusement, and has some thoughts, he says, of settling his son and tutor at Rheims, or some other town in France, for the sake of the language. Barré is likewise at Paris, his view is understood to be political.

Compiegne, July 28, 1764.

I know you love to do acts of friendship, and to avoid even an appearance of return. I am therefore afraid to speak, but you know my circumstances are easy, or rather affluent. With regard to myself I have learnt to conquer all desire of amassing, except in that degree that may become the father of a numerous family, and to them it can be no prejudice to offer the use of any money which your opposition may prevent your receiving from your own friends in its usual course. You see I offer very cautiously, for it is to satisfy your delicacy. I am truly sensible of your friendship, and shall be very happy with any occasion of proving my title to it.

Paris, Aug. 21, 1764.

I have heard lately from the Duke of Grafton, in that friendly style and manner with which he has always treated me; but he did [not?] mention the Duchess's name, or give any intimation of difficulties in that house. If the Duchess is well advised, she will not leave Bond Street.

Paris, Sept. 20, 1764.

The two books ascribed to Madame de Boufflers are not hers. Mr. Hume, who is, or wishes to be, in all her secrets, assures me she denies them positively and sincerely.

Lord March and George Selwyn are still at Paris. I hear the former is distressed and much concerned for the Duke of Cumberland, because he had a bet with him which may become doubtful in case of death.

Fontainebleau, Oct. 12, 1764.

Mr. Selwyn dined here to-day, and has just left us in very good spirits. He talks of staying in France till near the meeting of Parliament, not because he seems to be particularly diverted here, but because Lord March cannot leave it. He has made the Queen's party at Court different times, but is now disgusted, from being cheated at it by an old Polish princess.

Fontainebleau, Nov. 10, 1764.

I have never heard that Lord March was going to be married; I have been told that he had a genteel passion here, which a hundred have had before him. With this lady he will run no risk of a very serious attachment; she is a married woman, and has shown her indifference to persons by admitting many to some share of her favour.

Mr. Hume has seen King James's Journal, and so may you when you come to Paris. It is in the Scotch College, from whence it is not permitted to remove it; I do not believe he has taken any extracts from it, but I will ask him when he returns to Paris. Mr. Hume is too idle and too well received at Paris to write histories, and it is perhaps the best understood philosophy to be amused.

Garrick dined with me to-day. I believe he will pass the winter at Paris; he has had an ague, which has pulled him down, but he is getting better. Mrs. Garrick is much altered. If you hear that he is to act here, do not believe it; there was some inclination that he should, and it was even proposed to name a piece on purpose, but he has assured me to-day he will not be so great a fool as to act in a foreign language.

Paris, Dec. 7, 1764.

Was any return ever so unequal? I received the most agreeable letter that was possible from you; and I am reduced to write a very dull one in answer; but don't pronounce any judgment against me till you find by experience how difficult it is to write letters from a foreign country. I am in company almost every night with twenty people, and yet there are scarcely any of them that you know anything about, or that you would wish to be troubled with their history. I believe you did not adore Madame d'Usson while she was in England, and of course will have no curiosity about her. Madame de Boufflers is in retirement because her husband is lately dead, but the report of Paris is that she will come out soon Princess de Conti; she and the Prince are at Madame D'Arthy's (a sister of Madame de la Touche's), and the first mistress the Prince of Conti ever had; in any other country but this, this circumstance would prevent these ladies living together, but here it makes not the least difference, and Madame D'Arthy I am told has a great friendship for the other. Mr. Hume is always with Madame de Boufflers, and is certainly in the secret, but he won't divulge it yet, and he is so much in love with her, that I am convinced he will be grieved to see her married to anybody. Did my Lord ever tell you that Lord Holdernesse, who always must sigh for some lady, chose the same object; in England between thirty and forty is not just the age for women to have many admirers, but here you will find they are much more fashionable than the very young women. You are so occupied with royalty in your letter, that you don't bestow one line upon two curious anecdotes in my family, which I should have wished to have been informed of; that is, the separation, and the extraordinary account of the robbery at Lord Harrington's.

You must bring all the pamphlets yourself, for there is certainly no occasion for Dr. Hunter's coming to Paris, though all my letters from London have told me so. I supped in company with Madame la Maréchale de Mirepoix last night, and told her you had promised to be here in February, but she says she has been so often disappointed that she is determined not to expect you, till she hears you are landed at Calais. I am sure you are too faithful to your promises, to forfeit them again about coming; and it will add vastly to the pleasure we shall have in your being here, if you accept my Lord's proposal to you, of inhabiting my son's apartment while he is absent; we would not offer it to you, if you were a fat man, as it is so very small

but that is its only fault, and it has many advantages of warmth, quietness, prospect, &c. We saw several French officers last night, who laughed at themselves for being so credulous as to believe a foolish report when they were in Germany, that the reason Lord Granby did not wear a wig, was, because the Duke of Rutland had given him four and twenty thousand pounds upon condition he never would put on one; they don't know who spread it, but till three days ago they believed it. I am sure Lord Granby would be surprised to find that his bald head had been the subject of a falsity. Lord March and Mr. Selwyn seem to intend to stay here till February, which I am glad of, for I see Mr. S. often, and I need not tell you that he is entertaining. He falls asleep now and then at the faro table, but it is not surprising, as we have played sometimes till seven o'clock in the morning; and he tells me he has often slept as heartily at ten o'clock at Arthur's. I am not at all disgusted with my pedigree, though Rebecca comes in rather abruptly; but you have the advantage of making everything you do agreeable to one, and I believe would almost be able to make your good old relative Lady Walpole satisfied with hers. I believe it is thirty years since she was here, and yet they have not forgot her. I have seen very few of the sights in Paris and its environs, and I intend to reserve all the rest that I may have the pleasure of going with you; for I am sure you will want to see everything that is worth seeing, and you are the best guide in the world. I am going to sup at the Duchesse de Duras, and, as it is late, I have not time even to make a second excuse for sending you such a dull letter.

I am, dear Mr. Walpole's

Most faithful and obedient Servant,

Paris, Dec. 18, 1764. J. H. [Lady Hertford.]

We are told here that when Stanley returned to England, his trunk was opened according to the present rigour which prevails, and a parcel taken out by the Custom House officers, which was suspected to be books, but that upon opening them in London, where they were sent, they proved to be twelve copies of Mr. Wilkes's letters to his old constituents at Aylesbury, which his servant, who is a friend of Mr. Stanley's servants, found means to place there for security. The English are the more diverted with it at Paris, because Wilkes, from being once in company with him when he was here, now drinks his health in a bumper. Wilkes is going to Italy, and proposes to employ himself there in writing the history of our present King, and, beginning with the present moment, to write backwards into the English history from the Revolution. Garrick is likely to spend the winter here, and to pass it agreeably. I think it will be fashionable to see and admire him, though his language is very indifferent.

Paris, Dec. 20, 1764.

Mr. Selwyn tells me he was invited to partake of the diversions of Parliament, but that he has refused till next month; this perhaps you should not say.

Paris, Jan. 18, 1765.

G. Selwyn is still at Paris, and I think likely to be here. He waits for and upon Lord March, who does not seem disposed to leave it. Mr. Selwyn told me yesterday he began to fear the consequences of his absence, as he should be very sorry to offend the King, but I think without his Lordship he cannot return, and must necessarily run every risk. The English play here a good deal, but it is chiefly amongst themselves, and in a particular society, so that no great harm is likely to arise from it.

It is not only in England that they fight duels; Lady Hertford, Mr. Hume, and myself, were melancholy eyewitnesses to one last week, between two French soldiers, in which we saw one killed before our window as we sat at dinner.

Paris, Feb. 9, 1765.

The masked balls ended last night with the Carnival. Lady Ecklin, whom, perhaps, you did not suppose at Paris, was near bringing a countryman of mine into a difficulty at it, but he has extricated himself with great good sense and propriety. Lord Anglesea was walking in the ball room without a mask, when he was desired by a person in a mask to put his on, and to give his assistance to go through the crowd into another room. The masked person was dressed in man's clothes, unknown to his Lordship, but proved to be Lady Ecklin. In passing through the crowd, a young gentleman, who is nearly related to Madame de Mirepoix, unluckily pushed against her so violently that Lady Ecklin felt it sensibly, and with so much resentment that she struck him two blows, upon which he attacks the mask, and is informed it is a woman.

The honorary laws of this country, you must be informed, for I believe nobody would guess it without being told, make a man under any circumstances strictly answerable for the behaviour of a lady with whom he is in company, and Lord Anglesea might, if he chose it, have very regularly cut this young gentleman's throat, but upon his saying with great propriety, and at the same time with very becoming spirit, that he was far from intending any insult by the blow given by Lady Ecklin, her Ladyship will not have the credit of having any blood spilt for her upon this occasion.

Paris, Feb. 20, 1765.

George Selwyn talks of returning to you next week; I do not know whether he can drag Lord March so soon away. They seem much divided in inclination, and hitherto my Lord's has prevailed: they cannot part. There will go from hence a very pretty sort of man with them, the Comte de Schneloff. He is a Russian, and was the favourite of the late Empress; since her death he has lived chiefly out of his own country, whether for private reasons or from choice I cannot tell, he talks of returning there again. The English gentlemen supped with us last night; I do not mean all, but the cream of the young men at Paris. The company was pretty large, and it was necessary to have faro for Madame de Mirepoix and the Duchess of Praslin. Do not add to Lord Holland's disorder by telling him his son lost five hundred louis, perhaps he may know or love me so little as to think I had a share in the bank. The Comtesse d'Egmont and Madame de Mirepoix took their leave of Lady Hertford the next morning at eleven o'clock. Young Fox is a very good lad, without guile or design, and he will probably, I think, spend money as fast as his father has collected it. Lord Ossory likewise loves play much, but is more prudent; they will be good recruits for Almack's.

Garrick stays with us some time longer. I do not think he seems impatient to adventure himself in England; his health is indifferent; he has no mind to return upon the theatres, and he may be called for when he is in London. He is much admired in Paris, even by those who do not know him, it is a fashion to think him excellent. He is to dine here next week with some French ladies of great distinction, who have solicited this favour. Mademoiselle Clairon will likewise be invited, whom Garrick admires with great reason. I do not know that he has any other favourite at the French Comedy, except Preville, a very celebrated comedian here, whom Garrick has endeavoured to improve by his lessons and example. They met the other day upon a public walk here, and in conversing upon their profession Garrick told Preville he acted the drunken man well, but he would act it still better if he did it more nobly, and that his *jambes n' etaient pas assez cuivrées.* To persuade him perfectly, he showed him how to act the part by playing it himself; the other was tempted to improve upon so good a model, and they both performed so naturally, that they assembled a crowd around them, to see what would be the end of the drunken frolic.

Mademoiselle Clairon has threatened to quit the stage, but is again reconciled to it; her reason was that she was ill-used in a sort of monthly magazine that comes out here. She even complained to the Duc de Choiseul, who told her that if she would compare her situation with his, she could be at no loss for his opinion, that it was her fate, though this instance was indeed an exception, to be praised and applauded

every day; that his lot was widely different, that he was constantly hissed and abused and yet he continued to act.

Paris, March 9, 1765.

George Selwyn hopes to leave Paris in two or three days, but he is tied to a noble lord, who seems to want resolution, and he can answer for nothing when his friend governs.

Paris, March 22, 1765.

Lady Holland supped here last night. Lady Hertford tells me she can perceive through all her coolness that she is stung with the sacrifice made of her husband to Mr. Townshend. Lady Sarah seems as happy in proportion with the news she has received of Sir C. Bunbury's promotion in Ireland. Will you believe it, I cannot persuade a Frenchman to think her handsome, though she was in beauty last night; they astonish me by answering that Lady Louisa has more beauty.

Paris, May 30, 1765.

I have not yet received Mr. Hume's appointment, though it has been so long promised; perhaps, by this time, Sir C. Bunbury, who, I am told, did all he could to conceal his own promotion, in order to have both doors open, is by this time trying the new ministers, to be reinstated in what he gave up; but it is now too late, the appointment is made public here, and I shall expect it to be done by those who think me worth employing here for some time longer.

Paris, July 1, 1765.

Mr. Hume is at last made Secretary to this Embassy. I believe you will think I did right in expressing myself plainly upon this occasion. When Sir C. Bunbury was removed, it would not have become me to be disappointed a second time, and I have no reason to think myself a favourite at present.

Paris, June 20, 1765.

Lady Greenwich remains at Sudbrook. The world blames her for not having attended earlier than she did to Mr. Townshend's case. He was not thought to be in any danger, and it was treated as a nervous complaint, till the disorder was too deeply rooted. He has been opened, and they talk of an adhesion to the side, but I believe the cause of his death was an inflammation in his bowels. It is said that Lady Townshend has offered to settle £20,000 upon the children, if Lady Greenwich will do as much; some say Mr. Townshend is dead in very moderate circumstances, and others, worth £80,000.

London, Sept. 14, 1767.

My dear Horry, *London, Sept.* 17, 1767.

Mr. Townshend's death, I told you in my last letter, made no alteration; I will explain myself now more particularly. The Duke of Grafton, who was concerned with him in the same office, and more immediately exposed to difficulties, from the daily inconstancy and vanity of his nature, from the moment of his death, I believe, felt himself relieved. My brother is fully sensible of all his weaknesses, and upon the whole thinks it may be an advantage to government; he is still sensible that the load is heavier upon him in the House of Commons, as he now remains the only man to be attacked, and does not know that he has any able advocate who will be willing and able always to assist; he is, however, not at all shaken by this event. The seal of the Exchequer was immediately offered to Lord North, who declined it, but with the strongest assurances of attachment to the present system, saying, he was diffident

of his own abilities, and was unwilling to engage in anything which would separate him from his father, who was in a very low and declining state, but that he should be equally ready upon all occasions to take the most active part in their service. I came to town just at this time, and went with my brother to the Duke of Grafton, who told us, that upon thinking of this subject with all the consideration he could give it, and weighing the merits of all such as could be competitors for it, he could think of no method so likely to answer the purposes of Government, as the two which he should submit to our consideration,—the one to appoint Lord Barrington, Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had executed the office part of the business extremely well in difficult times, and to appoint for his successor Lord Clare, Mr. Ellis, or any other person of that rank in the House of Commons, who might be thought more proper. The other, to put the Seal, as a less laborious office, if he could reconcile himself to it, into my brother's hands, and thereby to open the Seals for Lord Hillsborough, and to give the Post Office to Lord Edgecumbe, or whoever he should think more useful. My brother did not object to this proposal, as a thing to which he might not have yielded, but said that he chose to decline because the finances of this country had not been his particular study, and therefore he might be found deficient in them; that at present he could in debate take up such parts as he understood, and decline the rest without reflection, but if he was called upon in office, he could not, without exposing himself, avoid answering every objection; and upon his asking my opinion, I could not differ with him, especially as the office in the Ordnance, which he has lately accepted, is, from its being an office of account, and in some measure mixed or dependent upon the Treasury, perhaps incompatible with it. It stands, therefore, at present, as most likely to go into the hands of Lord Barrington, and if it should, I suggested to the Duke of Grafton that it might be prudent to consult Lord Granby before another Secretary at War was appointed, as every temper might not submit to the present method of doing that business to gratify his Lordship. The Duke of Grafton is now out of town; my brother tells me he has learnt to-day, but is not certain of his intelligence, that Lord North repents, and wishes to have it.

C. Townshend is, I think, as little lamented as you can suppose him; Lady Greenwich is not thought to be in absolute despair; Lady Mary Coke, who loves grief, has flown to her retirement at Sudbrook. The dowager Lady Townshend is much afflicted; Lord Townshend feels his loss in his present situation, but was at Court to-day doing business, and goes to Ireland next week. Lord Mansfield has told Mr. Hume that C. Townshend had engaged, since the *peerage*, to be useful to them in opposition, and as a proof of the probability of it, and the ingratitude of his temper, he has since wrote to my brother, saying the King had given it unasked, though my brother himself carried the message from him, saying he would resign if it was not granted.

Lord Chatham is said to be recovered. Mrs. Pitt, his sister, says, he was neither so ill, nor is now so well as has been reported, but that she knows enough of his constitution to follow it round the year, as it is very politically disposed, and that her knowledge of it makes her conclude, he will be very well during the months of Sept. and Oct., that in Nov. his health will be more doubtful, and will be absolutely determined by the meeting of Parliament, from the state of the times. That her brother does not delight in halcyon days, but chooses rather times of difficulty, and therefore will choose retirement or public life, as matters may be easy or confused, and worthy of his attention; in the mean time I do not find he communicates at all with [the] administration, but the Chancellor is gone to the Bath, and must learn something of him; his Lordship has sold chief part of the Pynsent estate, and I hear did it by letter of attorney to Lady Chatham. The anecdote you tell me from Paris is curious, and may correspond with Mrs. Pitt's ideas. Sir E. Walpole has declined Yarmouth after your example, and I hear one of the Walpoles will succeed him. The vacancy you have made, Lord Buckingham tells me, will be more uncertain; your constituents have not yet taken your advice, but are in the midst of confusion. Mr. Walpole has left them for some time, and his interest has suffered so much from the attendance of the other candidates that Lord Walpole was alarmed; he is now gone down, and will, I suppose, make it up by means equally out of your prescription.

The Duke of Northumberland has told me to-day that Lord Carlisle is supposed in the North to have given his interest both in Cumberland and Carlisle against Government; I will not be named, but if you see George Selwyn, and he is as desirous as he was of getting the Green Ribbon for his Lordship, the sooner he gives directions upon the point, if it is yet time, the better. Mr. Harris, my brother-in-law, is in a very low-spirited unhappy way to himself, the physicians see no danger, my sister feels great unhappiness, and wishes him in town.

I long to see you here, and so does my brother; my house is a melancholy place without you, pray come away, I will do the best I can till you come, but you will make us all happier, easier, and more satisfied when we can take your advice and assistance with us. I will not enter into any further particulars, as I hope to see you soon.

Adieu! With the best wishes and compliments of all my family,

Dear Horry,

Most truly and affectionately yours,

HERTFORD.

I beg my compliments to all who remember me at Paris.

Lord North accepts.

DEAR HORRY,

I called this morning on coming from council to acquaint you that the two Dukes' marriages were this day reported to be legal, and ordered to be entered accordingly in those books.

The Duke of Gloucester's is from the depositions you mentioned to me, with the addition of one from the Bishop of Exeter. The Duke of Cumberland's was all in the most perfect form.

Grosvenor Street, May 26, 1773.

COUNTESS OF HERTFORD TO HORACE WALPOLE.

DEAR MR. WALPOLE, *Sept.* 8, 1775.

I have no inducement for writing to-day but gratitude, for London is bereft of all its inhabitants, and if there is any news here there is nobody to impart it. I am become almost as great a traveller as yourself, for I have been ten days in Warwickshire since I saw you, and the day after to-morrow I go to Sudborne to stay about the same time. I had rather pass those days at Paris to do the honours of it to you, and to satisfy my own curiosity, for there are many things there I should like to see again, and some people who were so good to me, I can never forget them. Your poor housemaid lamented you had suffered so much by being sick at sea, but I hope all the bad effects ended upon landing, as your letter to me (I flattered myself) was wrote when you was in good spirits. Our weather lately has been hot and wet, which is exactly what disagrees the most with my feelings, and I fear with the corn. Lord and Lady Villiers are determined to set out the 1st October for Vienna, and as they are to go by Frankfort, I am told the road is so bad, that they will meet with very great difficulties; but it is all fixed, therefore we prudently say no more; we fear much for her health, and I believe could have prevailed with Lord Villiers to have left her, but Lady Grandison said if she did not go with her son, she should have a much worse opinion of her. The beau Richard is come from Jamaica and is gone into Suffolk with my Lord, and is grown so robust in his figure that I think he may venture to have his teeth cleaned, without any risk of his getting cold. The Vine and her daughter, I hear, are set out upon a tour in France for a few weeks. They went this morning, and she signified to her friend that she wished to be out of the way till a certain wedding was over, which she has fixed is to be very soon, though, I know, if it ever is, it will not be for a great while; but this is a subject we don't talk upon at present, and I talk upon very few with her, except upon loo, as she has such absurd ideas. The Prince of Hesse is arrived, and my Lord, who has seen him several times, likes him very much; he intends staying here the whole winter, and therefore proposes asking H.R.H. to take a house, and not remain at Cavendish House. You

must not tell the good story about Mrs. Vaughan any more, for her husband died last night, and I hear she is almost distracted. I have not heard for some days of Lady Aylesbury, but I believe she still has very little use of her arm; as the swelling continued a great while, and, I fancy, is not yet gone off.

Our Parliament meets the 26th October. There has been no news of consequence from Boston since you went. I found Ragley in great beauty, but wetter than I ever saw it, as they had not had a dry day there since Whit Sunday, though London and its environs had so fine a summer till August. Mr. Selwyn is at Richmond with the child, and foregoes the joy of going to Castle Howard for her sake. Lord March is not quite in his good graces at present, for they have been three weeks there and he has not made them one visit, though he has made a great many to a beautiful Kitty in London. I now reckon summer almost over (which I rejoice at), as Drury-lane play house opens to-morrow se'ennight. Pray write to me soon, and tell me some more Paris news, and then set out yourself to inform me of more. Herbert Lodge is very neat, and has a very fine view of one side, but it does not look like a place that had cost six thousand pounds. You won't envy me at Sudborne, as you don't admire it more than I do: and if it was not for the pleasure of seeing my Lord there, I should certainly not go. It is time to release you, and I should have thought it more kind not to have troubled you with a letter if I had not wanted to tell you how much obliged I was to you for writing to me. I am at all times

Most faithfully yours,

J. H.

Have you met with anything half so clever at Paris as Priscilla Plaw?

COUNTESS OF HERTFORD TO HORACE WALPOLE.

London, Sept. 25, 1775.

Lord Beauchamp has been a month at Lord Irwin's, in Yorkshire; and though we have not yet announced it to anybody, I must tell you the satisfaction we feel, at its being fixed that he is to marry Miss Ingram.* Her education has been such as to give us great hopes of her turning out just what we would wish his wife to be; and her disposition is as perfect as her person. She is not seventeen, and therefore rather too young for him, but she is so composed for her age, and is so fond of reading and amusing herself in a rational way, that I have no fear of her youth being any disadvantage, and she has an exceeding good guide in Lady Irwin, who is one of the most sensible women I ever conversed with Lady Barrymore and Massareene are to pass the winter in London, so that you will still have your Monday's loo. I don't know where Mr. Selwyn is, but I suppose he is upon Richmond Hill, in the child's cradle. I have played at loo but once since you went, and yet I am alive, and not impatient for its beginning again. I must add one word to tell you that old Miss Macartney has got such an influence over old Lord Harcourt, that the way to get jobs done in Ireland is to pay court to her. She will have a large fortune, and it is thought if she gets possession of it, he will marry her. I don't now wonder the Nunehams don't go over this winter.

COUNTESS OF HERTFORD TO HORACE WALPOLE.

DEAR MR. WALPOLE. *Saturday, 9 o'clock.*

Lady Powis says you are so good to her, that she cannot refuse: but then she insists upon making her terms, and that you will meet us at Herbert Lodge, at dinner, on Monday, and we will all return to Strawberry Hill together. It is in Putney Lane, between Barnes and Wimbledon Common. We must play a great deal of whist in the evening, so that you must consider if you will admit us upon those terms, or if you will call in Lady Browne or anybody to your assistance. Pray don't put

* Francis Lord Viscount Beauchamp, married, 19th May, 1776, the Honourable Isabella Ann Ingram Shepheard, daughter of Charles Viscount Irvine, of the kingdom of Scotland, by whom he was the father of the Lord Yarmouth and Marquis of Hertford, who died in 1822.—CUNNINGHAM.

us in your best chintz bed, as I am in the secret, and know Sir Robert died in it.

Don't you wish us hanged?

Yours ever,
J. H.

Lady Horatia is charming, we are all in love with her in our way, and Hugh's passion is not abated. I have no idea of an happier pair; they talk of leaving us next week for their own country retirement.

Lord Hertford, Oct. 23, 1786.

Lady Maria is a very pretty and a very sensible woman; and he is in appearance, as well as in character, an amiable young man; it is their own fault if they are not happy.

Lord Hertford, Oct. 23, 1786.

ADDITIONS.

My father's style was not purity itself (iii. 226).

He's loud in his laugh, and he's coarse in his jest,
* * * * *

Swift of Sir Robert Walpole (Suffolk Corresp. ii. 32).

The second Lord Orford.

He was mad. I have heard from one of their descendants [Lord Hertford?] that the Shorters were tainted with wildness.—*Croker* (MS.).

Walpole's Three Nieces.

I. Laura Walpole (wife of Keppel, Bishop of Exeter), married 1758.
II. Maria Walpole, Countess of Waldegrave and Duchess of Gloucester, married Lord Waldegrave in 1759, and died 1807.
III. Charlotte Walpole, Countess of Dysart, married 1760; died September 5, 1789.

Walpole's Three Grand-Nieces (the three painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds).

I. Waldegrave (Lady Elizabeth Laura), born 1760. Countess of Waldegrave (wife of 4th Earl, who died in 1789), married May 5, 1782; died January 29, 1816.
II. Waldegrave (Lady Charlotte Maria), born 1761. Countess of Euston, married November 16, 1784; died February 1, 1808.
III. Waldegrave (Lady Anne Horatia), born 1762. Lady Hugh Conway Seymour, married 1786.

Lady Maria Waldegrave (*Walpole's Grand-Niece*).

"Last week Lord Euston was married to Lady Maria Waldegrave, against her father's consent and positive commands, who is furious about it."—*Dowager Lady Lyttelton to Mrs. Payne, Ripley Cottage, November* 16, 1784.—(*Addit MS., Brit. Mus.*, 22,130).

Lady Caroline Petersham and Colonel Conway.

CHANSON.

1.

UNE faveur, Lisette,
M'a prouvé ton amour
Au son de ma musette
Tu danse nuit et jour.
À celle de Sylvandre
Tu ne danserois pas,
Mais tu daigne l'entendre
Non, tu ne m'aime pas.

2.

L'autre jour dans la danse
Avec moi sous l'ormeau,
Tu suivois la cadence
De mon doux chalumeau
Sylvandre vint paroitre,
Et tu fis un faux pas ;
Je suis bien le connoitre :
Non, tu ne m'aime pas.

3.

L'autre jour sur l'herbette
Mon chien vient te flatter,
D'un coup de ta houlette
Tu sens bien l'écarter ;
Mais quand le sien, Cruelle,
Par hazard suit tes pas,
Par son nom tu l'appelle ;
Non, tu ne m'aime pas.

4.

Pour toi dans la prairie
Je cueillis un bouquet,
Je l'offris à Silvie
D'un air assez coquet ;
Feignant de rendre homage
A ses naissans appas,
Tu n'en pris pas d'ombrage ;
Non, tu ne m'aime pas.

1.

One favour, Cloe, lets me see
What from your lips I ask in vain ;
When to an artless pipe like mine
All day you dance upon the plain.
When Silvio plays, no more you dance,
Your graceful motions seem forgot ;
Yet still he plays, and still you hear ;
No, Cloe, no, you love me not.

2.

We danced together, t'other day
Beneath a beach's spreading shade,
Your easy steps, your melting look,
Adapted to the notes I play'd :
Silvio appear'd, you made a slip ;
But I'm not easily so caught ;
Too well I saw from whence that step ;
No, Cloe, no, you love me not.

3.

Last night my dog but lick'd your feet,
As on the verdant turf you lay,
Fawning to what his master loves,
You drove him with your crook away;
If his by chance, thou cruel maid,
Approaches to that happy spot,
You kindly call him by his name;
No, Cloe, no, you love me not.

4.

In yonder blooming mead of flowers
I chose a garland for your hair,
But offer'd it to Celia first
I thought with a coquettish air.
To her young charms and op'ning grace
Call'd it the tributary lot;
Coolly you saw it; yes, unmov'd;
No, Cloe, no, you love me not.

Walpole and La Belle Jennings (v. 36).

I remember her coming when a boy, to my mother at Chelsea, to solicit a pension; and her eyes being dim, and she full of flattery, she commended the beauty of the prospect; but unluckily the room in which they sat looked only against the garden wall.— *Walpole, MS. note in his own copy of De Grammont.*

Lady Cromertie (ii. 45).

To Mrs. Poyntz.

Madam:

I design'd to have done myself the honour to have waited on you this day with the narrative of my unhappy Husband's conduct, which you was pleased to desire a sight of, but I find I have not strength of Body to bear fatigue, for the little I have undergone yesterday and this day has quite exhausted me; and yet, good God, when can I be easy, or how think of rest, while my mind is tortur'd as it is.

Were I able to wait upon you myself, I would not presume to give you the trouble of a letter, but I'm unable to doe it, and still more unable to delay giving the information that you thro' tender-heartedness desired. Not dayes alone, but hours, nay moments may be most precious, and believe me, Madam, nothing but the unsupportable distress of a poor miserable wife for the best of Husbands should embolden me to address you in this way.

My most unhappy situation, which can better be imagined than expressed, and must, I dread, to my misfortune, be inconceivable to any but those who feel it, is my only excuse. Think, Madam, what is the distress and anguish of her who dreads and fears to lose a most affectionate and indulgent Husband, on whose life depends all her earthly happiness or misery. How shall I, in my present circumstances with child, bear the dreadfull shock before me, or how bear the thought of such a number of poor young innocent orphans being left exposed as they must be by their Father's death, to suffer for a cause which they have been carefully educated in an utter abhorrence of.

Allow me, Madam, to entreat you for the Lord's sake to take compassion on me, and to indulge your own Humanity and good Nature so far as to use your interest in behalf of one labouring under the greatest load of trouble that is possible to be conceived, and who would have totally sunk under it, were it not for His

Majesties known clemency, of which he has of late been most graciously pleased to give so remarkable an instance.

Mercy is a glorious attribute by which the Eternal God has delighted to distinguish Himself; were it as much the Prerogative of Kings upon earth to search the heart I am fully satisfied that tho' my unhappy Husband's crime is of the most heinous nature, yet his early sense of it, and his continued remorse, grief, and shame is so sincere, that his Majesty would see him a proper object of his mercy.

Your character, Madam, leads me to flatter myself you will not despise the affliction of the afflicted, and God has promised the Mercifull shall obtain Mercy, which I shall ever pray you may find, when appearing before that great and awfull Tribunal before which all the world must plead guilty.

I am,
Madam,
Your most obedient
and most humble servant,
J. Cromertie.

Sunday's evening.

Will you, Madam, have the goodness to cast your eye on the enclosed case, and bestow a few moments thought upon it.

Now first published: from the original MS. in the possession of the Honourable Mary Boyle.

Lady Meadows (iii. 262).

Jemima Montagu, daughter of Edward Montagu, Esq., second son of Edward, 1st Earl of Sandwich. She was buried at Kensington, November 6, 1759.

Miss Hobart, Lady Suffolk's grand-niece (iv. 149).

She never was married, and died at her house near Richmond in 1817. She was a great collector of old China, and at her death there was a great sale of it. A friend of mine with whom I went to the auction gave 62 guineas for a Sèvres pan for flowers, which would hold a quart, and the rest sold in proportion.—*Croker* (MS.).

Countess of Mountrath and Twickenham (v. 1).

It is remarkable that hitherto [1795] everything has happened which the Countess thus singularly provided for: the Duchess of Montrose took possession, quitted to the Duchess of Newcastle, took possession again on her death, and was succeeded by Lord Frederick Cavendish, who is the present proprietor.—*Lysons's Environs*, iii. 566.

The Duchess of Grafton's country house during her concealed confinement (v. 107).

Was at Combe, near Kingston-on-Thames, the white house on the hill, that was Lord Grosvenor's.—(Evidence of Dr. William Hunter, who attended her.)

Lady Denbigh and Lady Blandford.

They were sisters and Dutchwomen. Both are buried in Twickenhamshire,—Lady Denbigh (1769) at Teddington, and Lady Blandford (1779) at Mortlake.

Colonel and Lady Cecilia Johnston and the Edgecumbes (ii. 28).

By the book at White's Club, it appears Major Johnston was admitted a Member of the Club, June 10, 1746.

General and Lady Cecilia Johnston were particularly intimate with the Edgecumbe family—indeed Lady Cecilia was always supposed to have made up the match between *George*, first Earl of Mount Edgecumbe, and his wife, Miss Gilbert, whose great fortune retrieved the shattered fortune of the Edgecumbe family, and prevented

the sale of the family seat, Mount Edgecumbe. It had been much damaged by *Dick Edgecumbe.—Colonel Frederick Johnston* (MS.).

Miss Falkener, Lord Halifax's Mistress (iii. 317).

You have heard Lord Halifax is going to be married to Sir Thomas Drury's daughter, an heiress, and that Miss Falkener is retired upon half-pay.—*G. Montagu to Walpole. Greatworth, n. d.* (MS.).

KITTY FISHER AND LADY COVENTRY.

Kitty Fisher's Jig.

I SING not of wars or invasions,
I tell you a merrier tale—
How Fisher and Covey were met, Sir,
And sent all the people to gaol.

The one was a modest-faced sinner,
The other a quality toast.
* * * * *

But Covey could not bear a rival;
She thought it a terrible case
That first they should gaze at Kate Fisher,
And then come and stare in her face.

"Indeed, if I were but Moll Gunning,
They might have done just as they chose;
But now I am married to Covy,
They shall not thus tread on my toes."

"I'll make my case known to the King,
The Monarch I know he adores me,
And won't suffer any such thing."

Then straightway to Court she betakes her:—
"I'm come, Sir, to make my complaint;
I can't walk the park for your subjects,
They stare without any restraint.

"Shut, shut up the park, I beseech you;
Lay a tax upon staring so hard;
Or, if you're afraid to do that, Sir,
I'm sure you will grant me a guard!"

The boon thus requested was granted:
The warriors were drawn up with care:—
"With my slaves and my guards I'm surrounded,
Come, stare at me now, if you dare!"—

See vol. iii.. p. 233.

Sir George Warren lost his diamond order (vi. 406).

"Foote was there [the King's Drawing Room] and lays it upon the parsons, having secured, as he says, his gold box in his waistcoat pocket, upon seeing so many black gowns in the room."—*Cumberland to George Chalmers, January* 18, 1777 (MS.).

Francis Child of Osterly and Miss Hampden: fifty thousand pounds will dry tears (iv. 115).

Walpole's account is confirmed by Mr. Hampden's letter to Lady Suffolk of September 28, 1763 (Suffolk Corresp., ii. 280).

Lord Anson is dead; poor Mrs. Osborn will not break her heart (iii. 512).

Probably the sister of Admiral Byng, of whose death Walpole and other partisans of Byng, considered Lord Anson as one of the chief causes. He uses a similar expression [iii. 276] on the death of Admiral Boscawen.—*Croker* (MS.).

George Brudenel (iii. 512).

George Bridges Brudenel, son of James, brother to George, Earl of Cardigan. He had been Equerry to George II., and was therefore no great favourer of the new Court. —*Croker* (MS.).

Cole's Methodist neighbour (v. 97).

One Berridge, whom you may remember at Clare Hall.—*Cole to Walpole, December* 27, 1767 (MS.).

Mr. Smith, Walpole's old tutor (v. 173).

You must remember Mr. Smith of King's College, while you was a member there, and possibly his great formality and exactness; at least I do very well, who continued there so many years after you left it.—*Cole to Walpole, June* 17, 1769 (MS.).

Rev. John Dodd.

Mr. Dodd was my fellow-collegian and school-fellow at Eton; a man universally beloved; lively, generous, and sensible. I think his father kept an inn at Chester; but a Judge Dodd, of that county, related to him, left him his large fortune. He had a wretched tutor at College, John Whaley, who would have ruined most other people; but Mr. Dodd's natural good sense got the better of his vile example. Mr. Walpole and Mr. Dodd, while at College, were united in the strictest friendship.—*Cole, Athenæ Cantabrigienses* (MS).

Mr. Bentley.

Mr. Walpole told me some eight years ago, that his friendship with Mr. Bentley was cooled on account of his being forward to introduce his wife at his house when people of the first quality were there, and which he thought ill-judged.—*Cole, Ath. Cantabrigienses* (MS.).

I beg Mr. Pitt's pardon, not an iota (iii. 203).

This now common phrase was first used by Mr. Pitt.—*Mr. Croker* (MS.).

My Lord of Canterbury and his parboiled stag (v. 311).

This refers to a letter in Bennet Library from Sir Robert Dudley to the Archbishop of Canterbury, sending a great and fat stag, killed by Queen Elizabeth in Windsor Forest "with her own bowe-hand;" which, as the weather was wet and the stag somewhat chafed, and dangerous to be carried far without some help Dudley had caused to be parboiled.

Walpole goes to the House of Commons to hear Charles Fox (v. 380).

Consult Walpole's note from his MS. Memoirs, printed in Lord John Russell's Fox (i. 83).

If the King's heart were not entirely English (iii. 243).

This was a phrase in one of Queen Anne's speeches to Parliament, laughed at by Swift:—

The Queen hath lately lost a part
Of her entirely English heart.—
Croker (MS.).

Kimbolton Castle (iv. 88).

Walpole's letter to Montagu describing Kimbolton Castle, is not among the Kimbolton MSS. It was first printed in Walpole's Works (v. 639).

The Burkes and Walpoles.

RICHARD BURKE TO THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE.

DEAR SIR: *Whitehall, July* 7, 1782.

I took the liberty of calling on you this evening by my father's desire, he being confined at home by business, to trouble you with a second part of his conversation with you this morning. I do not know what excuse he made for trespassing so much on your friendship. I know there is none sufficient for my presumption, and can only beg of you to extend to me your indulgence to my father. You have enclosed the proposal in writing, somewhat altered from what you heard it in the morning, but, as I think it is, and intended it to be, more favourable to the present possessor. If, however, a gross sum should be preferred to a rateable share, as stated in the second condition, it will be easy to alter it back again. I will, with your permission, since you have suffered me to proceed so far, call on you in the morning, that I may explain anything that is defective in what I now trouble you with, as well as in the written proposal. My idea is, that this proposal should be laid before your brother. My father has informed me of your very great kindness in offering to undertake that office. If the advantage strikes his mind, or that of those whom he consults about the business, immediately and as clearly as it does me, I shall then be happy to proceed upon it. I will then take the liberty of informing you of a method by which the business may be concluded with the greatest facility *and the most perfect security* to Sir Edward Walpole. If, on the contrary, it does not strike him, I should wish to drop the matter entirely. I need not inform you that the peculiarity of the present conjuncture, which is indeed my apology to you, if I can have any, does not permit a long intercourse upon the subject. Therefore, if it does not pretty soon meet your brother's concurrence, I wish the proposal to be withdrawn. Till it does, I must request of you to conceal the name. I must conclude this letter by throwing myself entirely upon your good and kind feelings for my apology in this letter and the whole proceeding.

I have the honour to be,
with great respect,
Your most obedient humble Servant,
RICHARD BURKE.

RICHARD BURKE TO THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE.

Sunday Morning, July 7, 1782.

Mr. Burke presents his compliments to Mr. Walpole, and will have the honour of waiting on Mr. Walpole for the purpose of a few minutes' conversation with him at any hour he will please to appoint this forenoon.

Copy of Mr. Burke's Proposal.

July 7, 1782.

If it suits Sir E. W., the following proposal is submitted to him relative to his office of Clerk of the Pells.

But first let it be understood that, if Sir E. has made any arrangement by which the succession to the office may be continued to his family, the proposer requests Sir E. to consider this proposition as not made. If no such arrangement has taken place, he is to determine whether it will be for his advantage to accept this proposition.

It is proposed to Sir E. W. to resign his place of, &c., on two conditions.

First, that the person in whose favour he shall resign, shall pay to Sir E. W. during the term of his life, the whole and entire profits of the office (securing to Sir E. the entire profits of the office during his life, another person having the nominal possession), appears at first sight to be no disadvantage at all to Sir E. W. But the fact is otherwise. A reduction of the Exch. places is now in agitation; it is very probable, but not quite certain, that no reduction will take place while the present possessors hold those offices. If another has the nominal possession, it is very probable, but not quite certain, that there will be a reduction. Therefore, if Sir Edw. was now to resign in favour of another person, though he, Sir Edw., were to receive the whole profits of the place, he might still be a considerable loser. To counterbalance that disadvantage, it is proposed in the second place,—

That after the demise of Sir E. one-third of the profits accruing from the place (whether reduced or not reduced) should be paid to any person named by Sir E. W. during the life of the person, who on his resignation would now succeed him, a person under twenty-five years old.

Upon this proposal the question will be simply this:

Whether it is more advantageous for Sir E. W. to have his place on its present establishment during his life only, or to take the chance of the reduction of the profits of the office (whatever they may be) in order to secure one-third part of that office for any of his family during the life of a person under twenty-five.

If this proposal should meet with Sir Edw'ˢ approbation, the most indisputable security will be given for the performance of the conditions.

It will be found upon a calculation that the reduction of the office must be great indeed not to leave Sir Edwd. a considerable advantage (as the proposer imagines) by this scheme.

A proper method will be taken to ascertain the profits both now and hereafter, in order that if this scheme should take place, there may be no doubt that the sum accounted for is equal to the sum received.

(*Now first published* [*Bentley MSS.*], *referred to in Lord John Russell's Fox*, i. 451).

Walpole and Junius.

I possess Walpole's own copy of Junius, with his MS. annotations in the margin; in some places he asserts the *falsehood*, using that plain and forcible language, of the statements or accusations there made. I have also read a Paper, still in manuscript, written by Walpole, in which he expresses his object to be the discovery of that celebrated writer; while in this Paper, he plainly shows, that he possesses no superior knowledge regarding the subject, and points his suspicions, supported by evidence which I thought, when I read it, very general and inconclusive, on a person whose name had never before or since been introduced into the controversy, and indeed which I believe to be quite unknown to the world, either of politics or letters. This Paper was only casually found by me among other loose fragments of unfinished memoranda, and was neither written nor placed so as to show any artful and designing purpose to *mislead*.—*Rev. John Mitford.* (Pref. to Walpole and Mason Corresp., p. xxii.)

Highwaymen at Twickenham (vi. 359).

Have you not heard of the adventures of your poor pivy. I have been rob'd and murder'd coming from Kingston. jimey [her brother Raftor] and I in a post-chey at half-past nine, Just by Teddington church was stopt. I only lost a little silver and my senses, for one of them come into the carriage with a great horse pistol to sarch me for my watch, but I had it not with me.—*Mrs. Clive to Garrick, June* 10, 1776 (MS.).

Rose the Gardener, and the first Pine Apple.

9 Aug., 1661. I saw the famous Queen Pine, brought from Barbadoes and presented to His Majesty; but the first that were ever seen in England were those sent to Cromwell four years since.—*Evelyn's Diary.*

19 Aug., 1668. Standing by His Majesty at dinner in the Presence, there was of that rare fruit called the King-Pine, growing in Barbadoes and the West Indies: the first of them that I had ever seen. His Majesty having cut it up, was pleased to give me a piece off his own plate to taste of.—*Ibid.*

Walpole's Portrait of George Montagu.

The Strawberry Hill portrait of George Montagu (iii. 22) by Eckhardt, after Vanloo (Lot 112, twenty-first day's Sale) was bought in 1858 by the Duke of Manchester, and hangs in the White Hall of Kimbolton Castle.

'Eckhardt has done your picture excellently well.'—*Walpole to Montagu, June* 24, 1746 (ii. 32).

Walpole's Portrait of the first Earl of Sandwich (iv. 91).

The picture was sold to Lord Charles Townshend at the Strawberry Hill Sale in 1842 for 33*l.* 12*s.*

Walpole and Dr. Middleton (i. 307).

May 14, 1744.

Received of the Hon^{ble} Horatio Walpole, Esq., the Sum of one hundred and thirty-one pounds, as a full and valuable consideration for all the Roman and other Antiquities, severally described and explained by me in a Latin work, now in the Press; in virtue of w^{ch} consideration I do hereby assign and make over all my said antiquities to his sole use and disposal.

Witness my hand,

Conyers Middleton.

(*Now first published.—Bentley MSS.*)

Strawberry Hill Sale.

The Benvenuto Cellini Bell (Lot 83 of fifteenth day's Sale).

This bell, which excited so much curiosity at the sale at Strawberry Hill, I saw in 1849, at the sale of a solicitor's effects in Stratford Place: it sold for, I think, 70*l.* or 80*l.*—*Rev. John Mitford* (Pref. to Walpole and Mason Corresp.).

Strawberry Hill Sale.

Lot 92 of the sixth day's Sale is thus described in the Sale Catalogue:—

'92. A folio volume, written upon vellum, of Old English Poetry, from the library of R. Thoresby, very curious.'

At Thoresby's sale, Walpole gave 1*l.* for this very valuable volume of York Miracle Plays, and at Walpole's sale the late Mr. Thomas Rodd gave 220*l.* 10*s.* for it. Mr. Rodd sold the volume to Mr. Bright, of Bristol, at whose sale in 1844 it was bought by the late Mr. Thorpe for 305*l.* It is now the property of Lord Ashburnham. Walpole was not fully aware of its value, for there is no mention of it in his own account of Strawberry Hill.

Strawberry Hill Beauties.

The following portraits in oils, by *Mr. Sant*, were painted in 1857 and 1858 for Frances, Countess of Waldegrave, and the restored Gallery at Strawberry Hill :—

Duchess of Sutherland.
Countess of Warwick.
Countess Constance Grosvenor.
Countess of Shaftesbury.
Countess Somers.
Marchioness of Stafford.
Lady Selina Vernon.
Lady Augusta Sturt.
Lady Lavinia Hardinge.
Lady Churchill.
Honourable Mrs. Francis Stonor.
Baronne Alphonse de Rothschild.
Frances, Countess of Waldegrave.

CORRECTIONS, ETC.

Vol. II. p. 35, 37, Letter 224, to Conway } These letters, as the late Mr. Croker pointed
„ 225, to the same } out to me, are addressed to Henry Fox afterwards Lord Holland, and not to Conway. *For* 'Lady Caroline Fox, *read* 'Lady Emily Lennox.

„ 196, the Bishop of Douglas] Bishop Douglas.
„ 287, note 2, Walpole to Gray] Gray to Walpole.
„ 290, Duchess Dowager of Suffolk] Countess Dowager.
„ 296, puloined] purloined.
„ 303, note 1, Philpot] Philipot.
„ 379, note 2, Spenser] Spencer.
„ 462, Lord Anson] *for* 'Lord Anson,' *read* 'Albemarle'—Keppel, fourth Earl, d. 1772—Lord Anson was only a Baron, and Lord Albemarle not only an Earl, but a good liver.

Vol. III. p. 18, Mrs. Cleveland] *Query* Mrs. Cleland, widow of Pope's Cleland, dismissed by Walpole.
„ 30, WALPOLE] *dele* 'Walpole,' and *for* 'his letter,' *read* Walpole's letter.
„ 32, note 3, the only portrait *here*] *there*.
„ 32, note 6, the families Cavendish and Holles] the families of Cavendish and Holles.
„ 50, Lord Wilton to his brother] Lord Lyttelton to.
„ 190, Epigram] *add* Epigram in note to end of letter.
„ 251, cut a colt's *week*] tooth?



HORACE WALPOLE.

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